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# HOMER'S ODYSSEY



*W. Mott*



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# HOMER'S ODYSSEY







"FLASHING SHE FELL TO THE EARTH FROM  
THE GLITTERING HEIGHTS OF OLYMPUS"

# HOMER'S ODYSSEY

A LINE-FOR-LINE TRANSLATION IN  
THE METRE OF THE ORIGINAL BY  
**H. B. COTTERILL M.A.**

EDITOR OF "SELECTIONS FROM THE INFERNO" GOETHE'S "IPHIGENIE" MILTON'S "AREOPAGITICA"  
MORE'S "UTOPIA" VIRGIL'S "AENEID" I & VI ETC

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
**PATTEN WILSON**



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TO  
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER  
AND TO ALL THOSE WHOSE LOVE  
FOR HOMER AND FOR WHATEVER  
ELSE IN ART IS TRUE AND BEAUTI-  
FUL GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO  
UNDERTAKE AND THE ENDURANCE  
TO COMPLETE THIS VERSION OF  
THE ODYSSEY

*"Ἦτοι μὲν πολλῶν ἐπιθεύομαι ἄλλὰ μοι ἀντῶ  
Ἔργον ἀίξουσιν μάκαρες θεοί, φ' ἐπιμήνω.*





# PREFACE

**I**N his *Lectures on Translating Homer* Matthew Arnold advises the translator to have nothing to do with side questions—such as the question whether Homer ever existed. I should rather say that, however much interest he may take in antiquarian, or philological, or other side questions, it is best for him to give a wide berth to theoretics and polemics. Indeed, if the translator is one who fulfils Matthew Arnold's requirements by 'reading Homer perpetually for the sake of his poetry'—if he has experienced the happiness of long and continuous intimacy with what is so beautiful and so restful—he will shrink with pain from the Babel and the acrimony of literary disputation, and will feel much inclined to say nothing at all, knowing full well that, whatever he may say or may leave unsaid, his work will have to speak for itself. But I have been asked to write a Preface, and must do so.

¶ I shall state briefly the origin and the object of my version and the main principles that have guided me. Also I shall give what information may seem likely to prove interesting or useful on the subject of the metre—some of it highly superfluous for scholars; and lastly I shall explain the pronunciation of the more difficult Greek names that occur in the poem.

¶ It was many years ago, in Central Africa, that I first conceived the wish to translate the *Odyssey*. At that time Dante, Homer and Shakespeare were often my only companions, save those well-loved *épîques éraïpou*—my faithful blacks; and while exploring the unknown regions and navigating the stormy waters of Nyasa I re-read the Wanderings of Odysseus with an interest very different from that with which I had studied them formerly for academical purposes, and I was so deeply moved by the poem that I naturally felt a desire to share my pleasure with others.

¶ I knew, of course, that English translations existed—some of them of high literary merit; but what I longed to do was to reproduce the original, as far as might be, in its simplicity, its directness and its rapidity—characteristics which were, as far as I could remember, scarcely discernible in the metrical versions that I had seen. I longed to produce a translation which, although perhaps not constructed after the rules of any literary Beckmesser, might act, so to speak, as a good conductor for transmitting some of the vibration, the warmth and the impetuosity of the poem—some of that fascinating influence which Homer's simple, direct, rapid narration exercised on me—and thus might enable readers ignorant of Greek to follow the story with ease, and to experience something of the same pleasure as those feel who can read the original.

¶ This wish remained dormant for many years, and when at last under favouring influences it revived and demanded a form I found myself obliged to consider what form I should choose for it. The more I had become familiar

*Preface* with Homer and with what, like Homer, is truly great and beautiful, the more I had perceived that there is no affinity between such things and affectation, and I had become more and more determined to avoid everything affected, quaint, archaic, 'literary,' 'poetical,'—to clear my mind of cant, as Dr. Johnson advises—to ignore the jargon and the maxims of the so-called literary person, and to endeavour to use a diction natural, simple, vigorous, direct, such as Homer himself uses. I also felt more and more determined to be literal, as far as was consistent with a natural, unaffected, idiomatic diction—to give, as nearly as possible, just what Homer said, and to give it, as far as possible, just as he said it—to act up to Browning's maxim :

*In translation, if you please,  
Exact !—No pretty lying that improves  
To suit the modern taste !*

Moreover I felt more and more convinced that in order to attain my object I must choose a rhythmical form. I was, therefore, faced with the question : What rhythmical form ?

❶ Rime, whether in couplets or in stanzas, I rejected at once. It seemed to me essentially alien to Homer, and perhaps I was somewhat influenced by the dislike with which the Greeks and Romans seem to have regarded it, and by memories of the ridicule attaching to Cicero's unlucky '*O fortunatam natam me consule Romam !*' Besides, I felt that it would necessitate paraphrase and 'pretty lying,' and would ruin the continuous flow of the narrative ; and all these reasons of mine were confirmed and supplemented later by Matthew Arnold's *Lectures*, which I first saw after I had translated about two Books.

❷ As for the ballad-form, it seemed to me still more alien to Homer than even rimed couplets or stanzas. The merits of the English ballad are something totally different from the merits of Homer's poetry, and, although on rare occasions it rises to a pathos almost comparable with that of the *Odyssey*, it is associated, alas, with a great deal that is very prosaic, very banal, very 'pert and jaunty,' and the ballad-metre has, as Matthew Arnold well says, 'no capacity for sustained nobleness.' Moreover a ballad-form had for me the insuperable objection that it did not allow line-for-line translation or any possibility of reproducing Homer's forms of expression.

❸ Blank verse, again, seemed to have other and perhaps greater disadvantages. The grandeur of Milton (to quote Matthew Arnold once more) is one thing, and the grandeur of Homer is another. The general movement of blank verse is that of the *più fermo*—the strong, determined effort of upward motion ; whereas that of the hexameter is like the downward rush of an impetuous stream. The use of blank verse, with its laboured movement, its system of pauses and its phrasing so entirely different from that of Homer, would have

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necessitated more than perhaps any other metre the wholesale recasting of *Preface* the original.

Q. Thus, by a process of elimination, I was reduced to some rhythm which had some similarity or analogy to the rhythm of Homer himself.

Q. I did not at once conclude that it was necessary or even advisable to adopt Homer's *metre*, for I knew that (as Calverley well points out) all the essentials of a rhythm may be secured without servile imitation of *metre*, and that Homer's swing and rapidity might possibly be reproduced in some metre analogous to the hexameter, such as that of Tennyson's *Voyage of Maeldune*.

Q. But I failed in my quest, and began to think of adopting—and, indeed, for a time I did attempt to use—some line roughly resembling the old hexameter; for I myself was then somewhat strongly affected by the widespread prejudice against the hexameter pure and simple. I fancied it might be possible to accommodate the 'barbarous hexameter' to the requirements of modern criticism by furnishing it with an *anacrusis*—that is, with one or two, or even three, short hopping syllables prefixed to the line as a kind of 'take-off,' such as one has sometimes in music before the actual air begins. Also I thought it might prevent monotony—of which some critics of the hexameter so bitterly complain—if one adopted a very rough, jolting kind of rhythm, like that of Clough's *Bothie*, and paid scant attention to spondees and dactyls, using almost any kind of 'foot' and depending almost entirely on the vigour of the language and the effect of several good thumping stresses to pull one through the verse, in the same way as in many a well-known line of Shakespeare, Milton, or Dante, the scansion does not stand the tests of the syllable-counter, but the rhythm of the thought and the vigour of the words carry one, like a great wave, over all obstacles.

Q. Then, for a time, I was rather taken by Worsley's suggestion that we might perhaps adopt as the ending of the typical English hexameter the rhythm — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ | — ◡ (e.g. 'sails of the black-hulled vessel,' instead of 'sails of the beautiful vessel'). This rhythm occurs fairly frequently in Homer and rarely in Virgil and is decidedly effective when occasionally used; \* but I soon discovered that after a few consecutive lines it becomes very wearisome, even when varied with the more usual and (in English especially) far more musical rhythm — | — ◡ ◡ | — ◡ (e.g. 'dark-eyed sons of Achaea').

Q. Thus, step by step I was driven back to Homer's metre, and at last I began to ask myself: Why not try *that*?

Q. Well—I had read most that had been written against the English hexameter. I knew Tennyson's bitter lines (though I had never discovered against *what* 'barbarous experiments' they were launched), and I knew Lord Derby's

\* In the Preface to his second volume Worsley gives several passages from the *Odyssey* translated in this rhythm.

For a 'pestilent heresy of the hexameter,' and the amusing couplet directed against Schiller and Goethe, namely :

*In Weimar und in Jena macht man Hexameter wie der ;  
Aber die Pentameter sind doch noch excellerter.*

Moreover I was informed by those who professed to have a delicate ear for the music of words that no man, woman or child, unless they knew Greek or Latin, could recognize any rhythm at all in the English hexameter.

But on the other hand I felt myself, and I was certain that every man and woman and child who understood English must feel, the wondrous rhythm of

*How art thou fallen from Heav'n, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning !*

—perhaps the finest bit of music in our language, and a perfect English hexameter.

And then I remembered not a few other grand and musical combinations of English words in hexameter rhythm, or something very similar, such as 'the Lord God omnipotent reigneth'; and I bethought me of many a well-known and popular English poem (to say nothing of *Evangeline* and *Andromeda* and the *Bothie*) the metre of which is composed of dactyls and spondees, or of anapaests, and has a much nearer affinity to the hexameter than to the iambic or trochaic metres of ordinary English verse. I found that such poems are more numerous than I had imagined and that they are to be found on almost every slope of our English Parnassus, from the lowly habitat of 'Old Mother Hubbard' to the levels of 'I am monarch of all I survey,' of 'The Assyrian came down,' of the *Hymn to Proserpine*, and of Tennyson's *Voyage of Maeldune*.

This *Voyage of Maeldune* is one of the most musical poems in English literature, and its metre is very nearly that of the hexameter.\*

Moreover (and this is a point of much importance, as we shall see) the beauty of its lines, though of course mainly due to the exquisite choice of words, is also to some extent due to two other reasons, *viz.* the coincidence of stress and length (which shall be explained later) and the contrast between the light, rippling dactyls and the sonorous, dignified spondees. How wonderfully beautiful, for instance, are these lines !

*And the brooks glittered on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls  
Poured in a thunderless plunge to the base of the mountain walls.*

*And the red passion-flower to the cliffs and the dark-blue clematis clung,  
And star'd with a myriad blossom the long convolvulus hung.*

But in spite of this proof that a metre composed on somewhat the same

\* Technically speaking it is 'a rimed catalectic hexameter with or without anacrusis,' *i.e.* a rimed hexameter lopped of its final syllable and sometimes preceded by one or more light, tripping syllables as a 'take-off.'

lines as the hexameter, without actually being a hexameter, can produce surprisingly beautiful effects in English verse, this *Mældune* metre has characteristics which, I think, make it hopelessly un-Homeric—especially the bang at the end of the line, and the rime.

Thus germinated in my mind the conviction—and it has struck root deeper every day during the last four years—that for the object which I had in view the only possible metre was Homer's own metre; that is to say, the most accurate imitation of it that was consistent with a natural, vigorous, idiomatic diction.

But it may be well, for the sake of those who are unfamiliar with the measure, to explain briefly the main characteristics of the metre used by Homer, after which it will be easier for me to describe and illustrate the fortunes of the English hexameter, and to explain the principles by which I have been guided.

The hexameter is so called because it is a measure consisting of six 'feet.' The last foot is always a *spondee* (— —) or a *trochee* (— ∪). The fifth foot is generally a *dactyl* (— ∪ ∪) but occasionally a spondee. The other four feet may be either spondees or dactyls. Thus, the first line of Virgil's *Aeneid* (I cite Latin as Greek may cause difficulties) is scanned as follows:

The ancient  
hexameter

*Ārmā vīr|ūmq̄e cān|ō Trō|jāe q̄i | prīmūs āb | ōrīs.*

Now, here are two things to be especially noticed:

[1] None of the feet, except the last, consists of a single word, but is formed of portions of distinct words, so that the whole line is, as it were, jointed together like some vertebrate creature. Lines have not always so many joints as this one, but they need a joint (a *caesura*) especially in the middle—in the third or, anyhow, in the fourth foot—to prevent them falling into two similar, or nearly similar, halves. This line has what are called weak breaks in the first, second and fifth feet, and strong breaks in the third and fourth. It is easy to see that with all the many possible variations and combinations of dactyls and spondees, and with all these different ways of breaking (or jointing) the line, the number of different hexameters that can be constructed is very great, so that there is no reason why the metre of Homer and Virgil should be more monotonous than that of Shakespeare and Milton.

[2] Each foot is composed of either two or three syllables. These syllables are either *long* or *short*. A syllable in Greek and Latin is long when its vowel is naturally long (as in *cānō*, *Trōjāe*, *prīmūs* and *ōrīs*), or when its vowel becomes long by position, i.e. when the vowel is followed by two or more consonants, which make the pronunciation of the syllable need more of an effort, or take more time. Thus, the first syllable of *Arma* is necessarily long, and if *prīmūs* were followed by a consonant instead of by *ab*, its final syllable would become long.



**Preface.** All ancient Greek and Latin verse is similarly based on the 'quantity' of syllables, every syllable being (with just a few exceptions) necessarily either long or short.\*

*The English hexameter* The rhythm of English verse, as of most modern verse, is based not on 'quantity' (length of syllables) but on accent or stress.

Of course, English words have what one might call 'quantity' or length: that is, certain syllables take much more effort or time to pronounce than others, and often a long syllable is unaccented while a short syllable may have a strong accent or stress. Thus in the word 'forest' the second syllable takes much more time and effort to pronounce than the first syllable, but the first is sharply accented. If we went by 'quantity,' we should certainly have to regard the word 'forest' as an iambus (∪ —), but nobody with any ear for rhythm would use it as such.

*False principles of construction* However, some theorists, and even a few verse writers, have insisted that the English hexameter should be based, like the ancient hexameter, on 'quantity,' quite irrespectively of accent. The result of acting up to this theory is generally something that cannot be recognized as a verse by the ordinary English reader.

*The quantitative hexameter* Sir Philip Sidney, one of the earliest writers of the English hexameter, constructed his verses on this system, and on the whole they are quite unreadable, though now and then, when by a happy chance the natural accent coincides with his 'longs,' the line is good enough, as

*First shall | virtue be | vice and | beauty be | counted a | blemish.*

Stanihurst, the collaborator of the well-known chronicler Holinshed, translated (about 1600) Virgil's *Aeneid* into hexameters constructed on a similar system—and very queer things they are. Those who are familiar with Virgil will perhaps recognize a certain famous passage under the following disguise:

*With tentative listning eache wight was settled in harckning,  
Then father Aeneas chronicled from lofty bed hautie:  
'Though my queasy stomach that bloodie recital abhorreth,  
You bid me, O Princesse, to scarrifie a festered old sore . . .'*

This system of constructing English hexameters on the basis of 'quantity'

\* It is possible that in Virgil, and perhaps in Homer, accent (that is, the natural stress laid on certain syllables, and not necessarily long syllables) may have formed a kind of undercurrent of rhythm, whose undulations did not always coincide with the rhythm of the 'longs and shorts,' as is also often the case in good blank verse. But we know too little on this subject to be able to feel any certainty. The accents which are used nowadays in Greek were invented by Alexandrine grammarians, in order to aid in securing what they considered to be the right accentuation, at a time when the classical Greek was dying out as a spoken language. When read aloud by a modern Greek, the verse of Homer seems to us to have little or no affinity to the quantitative hexameter, and, of course, none to the English hexameter.



without due attention—or in intentional opposition—to the natural accent *Præface* has been advocated by some modern theorists,\* but nothing has resulted therefrom but a few rather grotesque and unreadable experiments, and, as Matthew Arnold well says, the one thing necessary, if we are to have anything better than such experiments, is that the English hexameter should be easily readable—should ‘read itself’—should have something of the ease and rapidity and lucidity of Homer himself.

¶ Now no one, I think, will deny that such lines as the following ‘read themselves’:

*How art thou fallen from Heav’n, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning.* [Is. xiv, 12]

*Clearly the rest I behold of the dark-eyed sons of Achæa.* [Hawtreys]

*Or, if you please, with the fork in the garden uprooting potatoes.* [Clough]

*Over the sea, past Crete, on the Syrian shore to the southward.* [Kingsley]

*Flashing she fell to the earth from the glittering heights of Olympus.* [Od. i, 102]

*Thine was the counsel that captured the wide-wayed city of Priam.* [Od. xxii, 230]

¶ And when we consider why such lines run easily and ‘read themselves,’ we find it is because their basis is *accentual*—because a natural stress, or accent, falls strongly on just those syllables which occupy the places of the ‘longs’ in the old hexameter, and because all the syllables occupying the places of the ‘shorts’ are light and unemphasized.

¶ Therefore, in spite of all theories to the contrary, I believe that Matthew Arnold is right when he says: “I think prudent criticism must recognize in the current English hexameter (that is, the *accentual*, as distinguished from the *quantitative* hexameter) a fact which cannot so lightly be set aside: it must acknowledge that by this hexameter the English ear and the genius of the English language have in their own way adopted, have translated for themselves, the Homeric hexameter, and that a rhythm which has thus grown up, which is thus in a manner the production of nature, has in its general type something necessary and inevitable, something which admits change only within narrow limits . . . I think, therefore, that the prudent critic will feel that in English poetry the hexameter, if used at all, must be in the main the English hexameter now current.”

¶ But, most unfortunately, many of the advocates of the ‘accentual’ against the ‘quantitative hexameter’—that is, the ‘current English hexameter’ against the hexameter of Sidney and Stanishurst—have made a fatal mistake in maintaining that quantity (length, weight) does not exist at all in English, or, if it does, that it is a *quantité négligeable*. Anyhow, my ear has become ever more and more impatient of the ordinary English hexameter with its

\* For example, by Mr. Spedding, the Averroes of Bacon.

*Primer* disregard of quantity—the beauty and vigour of a line seeming to me to depend mainly on the coincidence of quantity and accent, and on the use of true spondees and dactyls.

¶ The first, I think, who made a serious attempt to advocate and acclimatize the accentual hexameter was Robert Southey.\* But his ‘principles of adaptation,’ as he called them, such as the free use of the trochee (— ∪) instead of the true spondee (— —) and the ‘licence of using any foot of two or three syllables at the beginning of the line,’ seem to me to be totally false. Moreover, the offensive tone of his hexametric *Vision of Judgment* (a deification of King George the Third even more odiously offensive than Seneca’s comic ‘pumpkin-fication’ of the Emperor Claudius) would in any case have done more to damn than to popularize the metre.

¶ In 1846 there appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* a translation of *Iliad I* and of *Iliad XXIV* into English hexameters. It was, as Mr. Blackwood informs me, by Sir Walter Scott’s son-in-law and biographer, Lockhart. In regard to metre these hexameters are, I think, a great improvement on Southey’s; but the general effect seems to me to be very flat and dull. However, this attempt to render Homer in his own metre excited a good deal of interest and admiration. Letters of approval, mingled with criticisms and suggestions, appeared in the Magazine, signed M. L., but written, it seems, by that modern Pico della Mirandola, the famous Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, who had already printed a not very successful hexametric version of portions of Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea*.†

¶ Another and a more important fact resulted from these hexameters of Lockhart. Longfellow was much taken by them, and their influence turned the scale in favour of the hexameter when he was (about 1847) considering what metre to adopt for his *Evangeline*.

¶ Longfellow’s hexameters have been criticized very severely, and doubtless Worsley is right when he says that “we ought to avoid the indiscriminate use of irregular feet and that random accumulation of consonants which gives such a blundering and floundering effect to many of the otherwise beautiful verses of Longfellow.” A line that is ‘blundering and floundering’ can perhaps hardly be ‘otherwise beautiful’; but no one with an ear for the music of

\* Probably influenced by the success of the version of Homer by Voss in German hexameters and by the immense popularity of the same writer’s *Luisa*, and of Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea*.

† The rules laid down and practised by Dr. Whewell appear to me as fatally false as those of Southey, especially his rejection of the true spondee in favour of the trochee, and his disregard of the length of syllables. But, as is also the case with Lockhart, it is mainly the want of a direct, vigorous, unaffected form of expression that, as it seems to me, makes his verses unreadable. Here are two lines:

“And he would be perhaps content with a servant that worse were,  
Who this knew and used, and would peevish be to be better.”

words, or with any feeling for poetry, can fail to find not only much that is 'tenderly elegant' (as Matthew Arnold calls it) but also much that is truly beautiful in *Evangeline*, in spite of its faulty metre, and in spite of up-to-date criticism.

❧ In connexion with this point it may be interesting to hear Matthew Arnold once more. "I think," he says, "that the dislike of the English hexameter is rather among the professional critics than among the general public; I think the reception which Mr. Longfellow's *Evangeline* has met with indicates this. I think that if a version of the *Iliad*\* in English hexameters was made by a poet who, like Mr. Longfellow, has that indefinable quality which renders him popular—something *attractive* in his talent, which communicates itself to his verses—it would have a great success among the general public."

❧ In a passage that I have already quoted from Matthew Arnold's *Lectures* he speaks of the possibility of certain 'changes' being introduced into the current English hexameter which, combined of course with other and more important factors, might give us a readable and attractive result. I believe that such changes are well and briefly summed up in Worsley's advice "to consult the claims of scansion as much as possible, though never at the expense of a true accentual rhythm, the ear alone being the supreme arbiter in all English versification."

❧ It is, I believe, through their violation of this principle that modern writers of the English hexameter have for the most part failed—for I fear we must allow that they have failed, in spite of the brilliant but apparently transitory popularity of *Evangeline*.

❧ Perhaps this needs a little elucidation, so I will here give some of the rules that I believe to be involved in this principle—rules which I did not deduce theoretically but learnt by experience and tested by practice, and which compelled me to recast a very considerable amount of the first half-dozen Books that I had translated.†

- [1] The accents (stresses) should fall naturally and strongly on the syllables that occupy the places that the 'longs' occupy in the old metre. Such a syllable should itself be, as far as possible, long, heavy, emphatic, or weighted with *meaning* when somewhat short in pronunciation—a syllable that makes one pause to think, such as a monosyllabic verb, noun, adjective, emphatic adverb or conjunction—or that syllable in a longer word which bears the weight of the meaning.

\* My own feeling is that the English hexameter is the only right metre for attempting to reproduce the rapid onward movement of the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad* is more dramatic and rhetorical, and I do not feel quite so sure about it.

† *Viz.* Books V to XII. I then tackled I to V, and lastly XIII to XXIV. I mention this because I should prefer the later books to be regarded as that part of my work in which the metre keeps most closely to my principles.

- [2] The syllables occupying the places of the 'shorts' (*i.e.* the last two syllables of the dactyls) should be, as far as possible, short, light, unemphatic—such as articles, unemphatic copulas, pronouns,\* short and unemphatic auxiliaries, short prefixes and terminations in longer or compound words, and never (even if short in pronunciation) any monosyllable or dissyllable that makes one pause to think, such as a verb, a noun, or an adjective.
- [3] *The true spondee* (— —) should be used, especially for the second and the fourth feet. The trochee (— ∪) should be eschewed.†

❧ To illustrate the violation of all these three rules we might take many and many a line of Southey, Lockhart, Dr. Whewell and others. For violations of [2] let us take Kingsley's *Andromeda*, a poem which, except for this characteristic, I greatly admire. The jewel-like richness of the diction and the vigour and directness of the expression put it on a level far above the range of mere scansion-criticism, but, nevertheless, I cannot feel satisfied with the following dactyls (and there are plenty more of this type to be found in *Andromeda*), for one of the two final syllables of the foot is either unmistakably long in time, or is far too weighted with meaning: *slow-footed*; *all gathered*; *golden-haired*; *home-going*; *sea-gulls swept*; (*till the boy red with (anger)*); (*at length she looked (forth)*). Such dactyls make the poem seem to me like richly harmonized music full of painful faults in rhythm.

❧ Then in reference to [3] take such a line as this one by Calverley (known as a master of metre and a severe critic of *Evangeline*):

*As in the | heights of | heav'n the | moon . . .*

and compare it with lines of Kingsley in which he uses the true spondee with fine effect, *e.g.*:

*Lifting her | long white | arms wide-|spread to the | walls of the | basalt . . .*

*Fearing the | stars of the | sky and the | roll of the | dark-blue | water . . .*

or with the line by Dr. Hawtrev before quoted:

*Clearly the rest I behold of the dark-eyed sons of Achaea.*

❧ Besides the above-given rules a matter of great importance is that of the breaks. The typical English hexameter should retain the *caesura* of the ancient verse in the third or fourth foot; but I think that a greater variety of

\* Pronouns and also copulas are of course sometimes emphasized and can be used as 'longs.' In such cases Milton wrote *hee*, *wee*, etc. The words *and*, *for*, and a few others may, I think, be used either as longs or shorts according to the context. Pause, position and emphasis may of course lend a word length (weight). In such cases one has to apply to common sense for guidance, as is indeed often necessary in scanning Homer's verses.

† In some cases I have intentionally retained some word, such as 'sacred,' 'bronzen,' 'Father (Zeus),' although false spondees, because there was only a choice between renouncing the one right word or allowing myself a slight metrical irregularity, such as Homer sometimes allows himself.

break, and of rhythm, should be allowed than would pass muster in a copy of Latin or Greek hexameters. For such rhythms therefore I do not apologize. *Preface*

¶ But it cannot be repeated too often that in poetry—and even in one's attempts to produce readable verse—metre is of secondary importance. The rhythm of thought and feeling is of far more importance. Great poets are great firstly because they are poets, and secondly because they are masters of metre; and also for the translator there are questions of far greater importance than that of scansion—one of these questions being that of diction, of the choice of words and forms of expression. But to enter into this question at all adequately would lead me too far afield. Nor is it necessary that I should do so, for, firstly, I can refer to Matthew Arnold's *Lectures*—to all he says about directness, rapidity, dignity, Shakespearean liberty, vigour, idiom, the avoidance of grotesqueness, quaintness, affectation, oddity, dialect, etc., as containing a full and accurate \* account of my own creed in this matter; and, secondly, I prefer to offer to the reader my work, in which I have carried out my principles as well as I could, rather than to weary him with theories. Whether I have succeeded in producing a version which will serve as a satisfactory medium between Homer and English readers and will help them to follow the story with ease and pleasure, lies on the knees of the gods. The very great and ever-increasing encouragement that I have received from those (and they are many) who have heard the thing read aloud, as well as from not a few eminent scholars, makes me hope that it may be so. If not, then I shall have an ample reward in the memory of the intense and long-continued happiness which I have enjoyed while engaged in the work, much of which was done during my wanderings and clamberings amidst the mountains of Switzerland. *Metre of secondary importance*

¶ The following letter (printed here with the kind consent of G. A. Macmillan, Esq.) seems to me very interesting, for it was written by one who, although he modestly disclaimed any technical knowledge of the subject, had an extraordinarily keen *flair* in literary questions.

From ALEXANDER MACMILLAN

To I. C. WRIGHT

October 28, 1864

¶ " . . . As I said before I have no sort of right to offer a judgment on the respective merits of blank verse and hexameters. But no authorities however

\* Except that I do not think he has perceived enough that Homer's language, though it never sinks into banality, does alter its level very much indeed with the speaker and the occasion. The 'large utterance' of the Homeric gods differs *totò caelo* from the language used by the old nurse, or the good old swineherd, or the malicious goatherd, or the impudent Melanthis, or the insolent youths among the suitors—differs also greatly from that used by Nausicaa, or by old Laertes, or by Athene herself when she has assumed the disguise of a young girl. And the language of each one of these seems to have a character of its own.



*Preface* big can take away my private likings. Mr. Tennyson, yourself and other high authorities say I ought not to like them, but the fact remains that I do like them. I would give anything to see Homer done with a metre like Clough's poem. . . . Your own admirable rendering I admire much, but the pace does not commend itself to my ear as harmonious with the mental mood which I feel in Homer. Pope's jingle I dislike exceedingly, and can in no degree respond to the praise men of infinitely higher claims to judge give it. I am thankful to you exceedingly for a faithful and forcible and harmonious rendering, but as I read I feel an impatience to see the verse break into a gallop or a canter. I ought to say that I am not influenced in the hexameter question by Professor Arnold's arguments, which indeed I have not read. If I bowed to authority—and how can I in a point of taste any more than in the colour of my hair?—Tennyson would clearly be first. I spent three days with him about a fortnight ago, and the question was debated between him and two scholars of eminence—one a distinguished Senior Classic of Cambridge. Beyond a general conclusion that you could not make English hexameters like Greek ones, I could see no result. It was not denied that a powerful and effective metre analogous to the hexameter and suited to the genius of the English language would be a great thing. Even these high authorities could not settle among themselves whether there was *quantity* in English metre! Tennyson maintained there was. He should know."

My thanks are especially due to those scholars and English writers who have kindly permitted me to print their letters of approval, namely, to the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, to Bishop Welldon, to Dr. Walter Leaf, Professor Edward Dowden, Professor R. Y. Tyrrell, Professor Verrall, Canon Wood, Canon Armour, Mr. G. H. Hallam, Mr. W. E. Heitland, Mr. T. W. Rolleston, Mr. W. F. Smith, and my old school-friend, Edward Carpenter. Also my warm thanks are due to my publisher for the very great interest that he has taken in the book and his anxious desire to do everything in his power to give it every chance of success; and also to Mr. Patten Wilson for his beautiful illustrations.

In conclusion, I must not forget to confess my obligations to the scholarly prose version of the *Odyssey* by S. H. Butcher and Andrew Lang, from which I have culled not a few choice words and well-turned phrases.

H. B. COTTERILL

VILLA CHENEVIÈRE, VEVEY  
June 1911

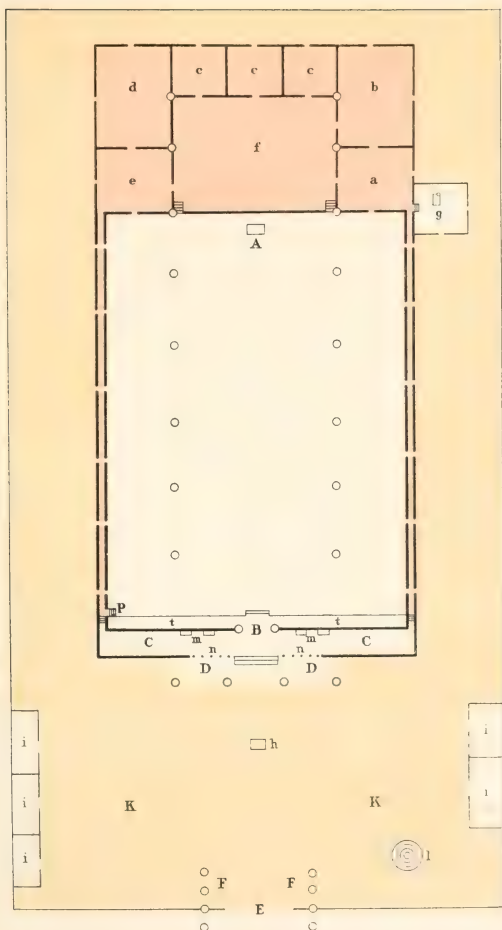




THE main features of this plan are such as one finds in ordinary representations of ancient Greek houses, but many details are due to what Homer says, sometimes not very clearly, about the palace of Odysseus, and also about the palaces of Alcinoos, Nestor and Menelaos. The Homeric palace, or large house, stood sometimes amid orchards, vineyards and gardens (viii, 112-130; cf. xxiv, 336 sq.). It was surrounded by a courtyard, probably of stamped earth, with trees in it (xxiii, 190), enclosed by a fence, or by a wall plastered and whitewashed within (iv, 42), and sometimes topped with branches (ix, 185; xiv, 10). The court-gate (E) was such as could be tied with a rope (xxi, 391), and had a pillared portal outside and (F) a portico (*aithousa*, 'sunning-place,' xxi, 390; xxii, 449) inside, and had no high threshold (vii, 130), for they drive in and out of the court (xv, 191) and the stables are in it (iv, 40). We have now entered the court, and the palace faces us. It will be easy to fill up the picture from the following facts and references. The pink colour on the plan represents upper rooms or passages.

- K. 'Levelled space' for games (iv, 627).
- L. 'Tholos'; dome-roofed kitchen? (xxii, 442).
- b. Altar of Zeus (xxii, 334).
- i. Outhouses (vi, 303), stables (iv, 40), mill-house (xv, 106).
- D. Portico, 'aithousa' of house, roofed, 're-echoing.' Guests sleep here in hot weather (iii, 399).
- C. Inner porch, elevated 'stoep.' Used as guest room (xx, 1).
- n. Open lattices.
- m. 'Polished stones,' seats (iii, 406; viii, 6).
- B. Front door; 'beautiful door of the court' (xxii, 137). Door-posts of cypress and threshold of ash (xvii, 339). In Alcinoos' palace posts of silver and threshold of bronze (vii, 89). Threshold high (to exclude snakes, etc.), so that one 'steps over' it and finds oneself on a 'stone threshold,' an elevated stone slab or platform, within.
- z. The 'stone threshold' (xxii, 1, etc.). On this Odysseus, Telemachus, the swineherd and the cowherd stand when fighting the suitors. I believe it to be at this (not the upper) end of the hall, and to extend across the whole width of the hall, to the postern, which is 'flush with it' (xxii, 126). From this stone platform (perhaps a part of the stone foundation of old wooden houses) there were probably a couple of steps down to the floor of the hall, which was here perhaps of stamped earth (xxi, 122) or possibly paved. The inside walls were smooth and 'gleaming' (xxii, 121).
- P. Postern (xxii, 125) flush with stone threshold and with steps to hall-floor; leads up to elevated passage (pink) communicating with upper back apartments (pink) and having 'mouth' with

- stairs into C on both sides of hall (xvii, 137).
- The great hall (megaron) had high roof (xxii, 298) with 'smoke-stained' roof-beams (xxii, 239), of pine (xix, 38), and openings between wall and roof for escape of smoke (i, 320). Between the pillars supporting the roof were 'beautiful alcoves' (xix, 37), and in the outer wall of each alcove were perhaps 'splits' or loophole windows, for light (xxii, 143).
- A. The hall hearth, near which stood the 'thrones,' easy chairs, etc., of Penelopeia (Arete, Alcinoos) in colder weather. (The action of the *Odyssey*, forty-two days, begins in autumn. Before it ends it is cold at night and early morning, and fires are needed.)
- The women's 'upper apartment,' for work, etc. The upper storey alone is here represented (pink). The ground floor below (back-hall) was for cooking and the day tasks of the women. The men thralls slept below; the women upstairs. Stairs lead up from the hall.
- a. Penelopeia's bedroom; has lattice overlooking the hall, for she hears and sees what is going on—hears Telemachus sneeze (xvii, 541)—and a window overlooking the road (xxiii, 365). Nausicaa's bedroom has a stove (vii, 7).
- b. Women's sleeping-room.
- c. 'Rooms of Odysseus' (xxii, 143) for various purposes.
- d. Upper treasure chamber where the bow is stored (xxi, 8) and the arms are hidden by Odysseus and his son (xiv, 17; xxii, 140). There was also a lower (underground?) treasure room (ii, 337; xvi, 285).
- e. Telemachus' bedroom (i, 425; xix, 48).
- g. Odysseus' room (on ground floor), described in xxiii, 190 sq.





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# ODYSSEY BOOK I

**S**ING, O Muse, of the man so wary and wise, who in far lands  
Wandered whenas he had wasted the sacred town of the Trojans.  
Many a people he saw and beheld their cities and customs,  
Many a woe he endured in his heart as he tossed on the ocean,  
Striving to win him his life and to bring home safely his comrades.  
Ah but he rescued them not, those comrades, much as he wished it.  
Ruined by their own act of infatuate madness they perished,  
Fools that they were—who the cows of the sun-god, lord Hyperion,  
Slaughtered and ate; and he took from the men their day of returning.  
Sing—whence-ever the lay—sing, Zeus-born goddess, for us too!

Now were all of the rest of the Greeks who had 'scaped from destruction  
Safely at home and secure from the dangers of war and the ocean,  
All but the one, whom yearning in vain for his wife and his homeland  
Still did the beautiful goddess, the sea-nymph lady Calypso,  
Hold in her hollow caves, with a longing to make him her husband.  
Ay and at last, when the year in the slow revolution of seasons  
Came, in the which, as the gods had ordained, he returned to his country,  
Ithaca's isle, e'en then was he nowise free from his troubles,  
Though once more with his own; and the gods were touched with compassion,  
All but Poseidaon, who was ever unceasingly angered  
Raging at godlike Odysseus and keeping him far from his homeland.  
Now was he gone to revisit the far-off Aethiop people—  
Aethiop people that dwell wide-sundered, furthest of mortals,  
Some where sinks Hyperion to rest, some where he ariseth.  
Here he expected of rams and of oxen a solemn oblation,  
Here he rejoiced as he sat at the feast. But the other immortals  
Unto the mansion of Zeus the Olympian gathered together.  
Then in the midst brake silence the Father of men and immortals,  
Since in the depths of his heart he remembered the noble Aegisthus  
Slaughtered by King Agamemnon's son, far-famous Orestes;  
Mindful of him these words he addressed to the gods everlasting:  
"Verily! how these mortals of earth give blame to the heaven!  
Evil is sent by the gods, they affirm! It is they that in folly,  
Ay in the madness of folly, o'erleaping their destiny, seek it.  
Thus did Aegisthus, in spite of his fate predestined, in madness  
Marry the wife of Atrides and murdered her lord at his coming.  
Fully he knew of the doom that impended—for this we foretold him,

Sending him Hermes, the keen-eyed Slayer of Argus, to warn him  
 Neither to murder the man nor his wife to solicit as suitor :  
 Else shall Orestes repay for his father a terrible vengeance  
 After the days of his youth, when he learneth to long for his homeland.  
 Such was the warning of Hermes, but nowise heeded Aegisthus  
 Well-meant counsel—and now he hath paid all reckonings fully.”  
 Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
 “ Father of Gods, O mighty Cronion, the highest of Monarchs !  
 Truly he lies o'erwhelmed by a doom that he merited richly.  
 Thus too perish whoever of men such deed shall accomplish !  
 Ah but the heart in my bosom is rent for the wileful Odysseus.  
 Hard is his fate : long years doth he ceaselessly suffer affliction  
 Far from his home on a sea-girt isle : 'tis the navel of ocean,  
 Even this isle well-wooded, whereon hath dwelling a goddess,  
 Daughter of Atlas, the wizard of bale, who of every ocean  
 Knoweth the watery depths, and alone upholdeth the pillars  
 Soaring aloft and keeping the earth and heaven asunder.  
 This is the god whose daughter a wretched and sorrowing mortal  
 Keepeth, and ever with soft and with flattering words of endearment  
 Charms him, to make him forgetful of Ithaca's isle ; and Odysseus  
 Years to behold once more but the smoke rise eddying upward  
 Out of the land of his birth—and he longeth to die. But within thee  
 All unmoved is thy spirit, Olympian. What ! did Odysseus  
 Ne'er by the ships of the Greeks do honour to thee with oblations,  
 There, on the Trojan plain ? Then why so wrath at the man, Zeus ? ”  
 Her then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the storm-clouds :  
 “ Nay but my child, what word from the door of thy lips hath escaped thee !  
 How am I likely to cease to remember the godlike Odysseus,  
 Him who in mind all mortals excels and in giving oblation  
 Unto the gods everlasting who dwell in the infinite heaven ?  
 No—but Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, stubbornly rageth,  
 Angered because of his son, by Odysseus bereft of his eyesight,  
 Even that equal of gods the immense Polyphemus, a Cyclops  
 Greater than all of the others. Thoösa the nymph was his mother,  
 Daughter of Phoreys the lord of the barren expanses of ocean.  
 She in the hollow caves of the sea held tryst with Poseidon.  
 Hence to Odysseus it haps that, albeit the King Earth-shaker  
 Slayeth him not, yet he maketh him wander afar from his homeland.  
 Come now, all of us here—let us straight take counsel together  
 How he shall once more win to his home ; and Poseidon will surely  
 Cease from his wrath, for he ne'er will be able alone to oppose us,

Setting at nought and defying the will of the other immortals.”  
Him then again gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“ Father of all of us, mighty Cronion, the highest of Monarchs !  
Seems it a thing well-pleasing to all of the blessed immortals  
Thus to permit to return to his home wise-hearted Odysseus,  
Then let us bid Hermeias the messenger, Slayer of Argus,  
Speedily winging his flight to the far Ogygian island,  
Bring to the fair-tressed nymph our will’s immutable verdict,  
Even that patient Odysseus return and arrive at his homeland.  
Now—for myself—I shall visit the Ithacan island, if haply  
Rousing his son still more I can light in his bosom the courage  
Unto a meeting to summon the long-haired lords of Achaea,  
Yea and a warning to utter to all of the suitors, who slaughter  
Sheep of his thick-thronged folds and his shambling crook-horned cattle.  
Then as his guide will I bring him to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,  
Tidings to hear, if he can, of the homeward return of his father.  
Hence too honour and fame shall he win in the land of the living.”  
These words uttered she bound to her ankles the beautiful sandals,  
Golden, immortal, that carry her over the waters of ocean  
Swift as the blast of a storm, and across earth’s boundless expanses.  
Then with her powerful spear bronze-bladed, of terrible keenness,  
Weighty, enormous and strong—wherewith in the ranks of the battle  
Vanquisheth all that she hateth that daughter of Zeus the Almighty—  
Flashing she fell to the earth from the glittering heights of Olympus  
Down, till on Ithacan land she alit by the porch of Odysseus,  
E’en by the courtyard door, with the spear in her hand, and she stood there  
Likened in form to a stranger, to Mentès, Taphian chieftain.  
Then was she quickly aware of the arrogant suitors, who haply  
Under the porch of the palace at draughts their minds were amusing,  
Seated on skins of the cows they had slaughtered themselves for a banquet.  
Busily flitting around were pages attendant and henchmen :  
Some in the bowls were mixing together the wine and the water,  
Others with sponges porous and soft were washing the tables,  
Setting them forth, while others apportioned the plentiful messes.  
Godlike Telemachus was the first of them all to perceive her.  
Grievously troubled at heart he was sitting amidst of the suitors,  
Picturing how peradventure his valiant father from somewhere  
Suddenly coming and driving the suitors in rout from the palace  
Honour again might win as the lord of his own possessions.  
Dreaming thereon as he sat with the suitors, he noticed Athene.  
Straight to the portal he went, for he felt sore vexed in his spirit

*Odysseus* Seeing a stranger so long at the door, and, whenas he arrived there,  
Grasping her right and taking the bronzen spear from the goddess,  
Opened in greeting his lips, and with swift-winged words he addressed her :  
“Hail, O stranger ! With us thou art sure of a welcome ; and later,  
After partaking of food, thou’lt tell us if aught thou art needing.”  
These words spoken, he turned and was followed by Pallas Athene.  
Unto the high-roofed mansion he led her, and stepping within it  
Leaned on the shaft of a pillar the spear he was bearing, and fixed it  
Into a stand bright-polished wherein were resting the others,  
Many and many a spear of the valiant-hearted Odysseus ;  
Then on a chair, outspreading the cover of linen, he set her :  
Richly adorned was the chair, and below for the feet was a footstool.  
Close to it set he a seat for himself rich-broidered, withdrawing  
Far from the suitors, in fear that the stranger annoyed by the uproar  
Loathing for food might feel, with that insolent rabble about him ;  
Ay and he also was fain of his long-lost father to ask him.  
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer  
Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,  
Bidding him wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside him.  
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread and lay it before him  
Lavishly adding thereto of her stores full many a dainty.  
Carrying platters aloft came also the carver and offered  
Dishes of various meats ; and golden goblets he gave them,  
Of times filling the which passed hither and thither the henchman.  
Now to the hall came crowding the arrogant suitors, and straightway  
All of them sat them in order adown on the couches and armchairs.  
Soon was the water for washing of hands poured out by the henchman,  
Baskets of wheaten bread up-piled were brought by the maidens  
While that the youths wreathed high with the foaming liquor the wine-bowls.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Came to the mind of the suitors the thought of a different pleasure,  
Even of singing and dancing—for such is the crown of a banquet.  
So, when a herald had handed a beautiful harp to the singer  
Phemius (ever unwilling he sang, compelled by the suitors),  
Unto the sounds of his harping his exquisite voice he uplifted.  
Telemachus meanwhile spake low to the goddess Athene,  
Holding his head right close, to be noticed of none of the others :  
“List, dear stranger !—for sure at my words thou’lt never be angered—  
Such are the pleasures of such !—harp-playing and dancing ! No wonder,  
Seeing they eat the possessions of others, nor fear the avenger !

Eat the possessions of him whose whitening bones peradventure  
Rot in the rain on the land or roll in the waves of the ocean !  
Were they to see him return some day to the Ithacan homeland,  
All of them straight to the gods would pray to be lighter in running  
Rather than richer endowed with the treasures of gold and of garments.  
Nay, it is vain ! he is dead of a pitiful death, nor is longer  
Comfort remaining, whoever of earth-born mortals denies it  
Saying he cometh again—since dead is the day of his coming.  
Come now tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it :  
Who art thou ? Whence dost thou come ? Tell too of thy city, thy parents.  
Whose is the vessel whereon thou art come ? How haps it that sailors  
Brought thee to Ithacan land ? What folk did they boast to belong to,  
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that thou hither arrivest ?  
One thing further relate me exactly, for fain will I know it :  
Art thou a traveller new to the land, or a friend of my father—  
Guest peradventure ? for such came oftentimes unto his homestead,  
Many a one, while yet he remained in the land of the living.”  
Him then in turn gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“ Well, I will tell thee of all that thou askest and truly relate it.  
Mentes—such is my name. Of a wise-souled father I boast me,  
Anchialus, and myself am the prince of the Taphian sea-folk.  
Now am I come to a port of thy land with my vessel and comrades  
Sailing the wine-dark deep on my way to a city of strangers,  
Tempsa ; for copper I seek, and my cargo is glittering iron.  
Yonder my ship on the side of the country afar from the city  
Lieth in Reithron’s port, by the wood-clothed Neïan headland.  
Yes, it is true—we can boast to be guest-friends one of another  
Even from days long past. If thou doubt’st, go ask of the grandsire,  
Hero Laertes. They say that he now no more to the city  
Cometh, but living afar in the uplands suffers affliction  
Sole with an ancient crone who attends to his eating and drinking,  
Placing before him his food when exhaustion cometh upon him  
Weariedly creeping about on the sloping knoll of his vineyard.  
Now I am here—for they said he was home once more in his country,  
Even thy father ; but heaven, it seemeth, hath hindered his coming.  
Natheless never on earth has he perished, the godlike Odysseus :  
Still he is living, methinks, mid the broad expanses of ocean,  
Held on a sea-girt isle, where hostile people retain him,  
Savages, forcing him all unwillingly still to remain there.  
Nay, I will venture to speak as a prophet—for deep in my bosom  
Heaven hath planted a thought that I feel to be sure of fulfilment,

Though I am neither at all a diviner or augur unerring—  
Verily not much longer afar from his well-loved homeland  
Still shall he stay, not e'en though fetters of iron constrain him:  
Sure he will plan his escape—such master of many devices.  
Now come tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it,  
Whether indeed (as thy stature proclaims) thou art child of Odysseus.  
Marvellous both of thy head and thy beautiful eyes is the likeness  
Unto the man that I knew when we oft held converse together,  
Ere he embarked for the land of the Trojans, whither so many  
Others, chiefs of the Argives, in hollow vessels departed.  
Since then ne'er did I see him again, nor was seen by Odysseus.”  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Well, Sir stranger, the truth will I tell thee and clearly relate it.  
Ever my mother hath called me the child of Odysseus. For my part  
How can I know? Not the wisest of sons can discover his father.  
Would that my fortune had made me the child of a happier mortal,  
Son of a man whom age finds living in peace in his homestead!  
Elsewise heaven hath will'd it: the most ill-fated of all men,  
He, as they say, is my sire. Thus far can I answer thy question.”  
Him then again gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:  
“Surely for thee is the heaven no nameless race in the future  
Keeping in store—for a son so worthy of Penelopeia.  
Now come, tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it:  
What doth this banqueting mean? and this crowd? Why needful thy presence?  
Hold they a wedding? or bout? No club-collation it seemeth:  
Such is the insolent licence in which they appear to indulge them  
Banqueting here in thy hall! Just cause for a man to be angered,  
Were but a sensible person to see such shameful proceeding!”  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Since, O stranger, thou fain wouldst hear of this matter and learn it,  
Once did the house of my sire seem like to be rich and be blameless,—  
Like to remain what it was while here in his home he was living.  
Other, alas, was the will of immortals who plotted his ruin.  
Lo, they have made him to vanish—as utterly vanished hath no man  
Ever before. Nay, e'en for his death ne'er thus had I sorrowed,  
Had he but met it amidst of his mates in the land of the Trojans,  
Or in the arms of his friends, when he wound to an ending the warfare.  
Then had the hosts of Achaea erected a tomb to his honour;  
Yea and for me—for his son—he had left great glory behind him.  
Ah but the spirits of storm to a death inglorious swept him,  
Vanished, unseen and unheard of; and nothing but mourning and anguish



Me he bequeathed ! Nor now do I sorrow and make lamentation  
Only for him ; for the gods send other and grievous afflictions.  
All of the chief of the men who as princes rule in the islands,  
Samos and Dulichium and the woodlands rich of Zacynthus,  
Ay and as many besides as in rock-bound Ithaca lord it,  
All come wooing my mother and wasting the wealth of the homestead.  
She dares neither reject their hateful proposals of marriage,  
Nor can she end it ; and thus do the men, consuming, devouring,  
Ruin my home—me too will they soon o’erwhelm in its ruin.”  
Then in exceeding displeasure again spake Pallas Athene :  
“ Nay by the gods, right sorely thou need’st that the absent Odysseus  
Come to thee quickly and lay strong hands on the impudent suitors !  
Would that I saw him this moment in front of the door of the palace  
Suddenly stand—with his helmet and shield and a couple of lances—  
Such as he was in the days when mine eyes first lighted upon him  
Making him merry and quaffing his wine in the hall of my homestead,  
Newly from Ephyra come—from the town of the Mermerid Ilus.  
Even to such far land had he sailed in his swift-winged vessel  
Seeking a drug right deadly of which he was fain to possess him—  
Poison, to smear on the tips of his bronze-shod arrows ; but Ilus  
Gave it him not, for he shrank from the wrath of the gods everlasting.  
Yet from my father he gat it, who loved him in marvellous fashion.  
O that he came—e’en such an Odysseus—to visit the suitors,  
Bringing on all of them speedy perdition and nuptials of anguish !  
Nay but we know not the truth ; on the knees of the gods it is lying,  
Whether he ever shall come, or shall come no more, to avenge him  
Here in the halls of his home ; but do thou take thought, I exhort thee,  
How to eject from the hall of thy palace this rabble of suitors.  
Now mark well what I say, and give it thy earnest attention.  
Summon to-morrow to come to a council the princely Achaeans ;  
Make to them all an announcement and call on the gods to be witness.  
Order the suitors from here to disperse each one to his homestead ;  
While for thy mother—if truly her heart be enamoured of wedlock,  
Send her again to her home—to the house of her powerful father.  
There can her parents arrange for the wedding and settle the presents,  
All of the wealth that is wont with a well-loved daughter to follow.  
Now for thyself—such plan I suggest : ’twere wise to accept it.  
Manning with twice ten rowers a vessel—thy goodliest galley—  
Start on the quest for thy sire, who so long is afar and unheard of.  
Haply an earth-born man shall inform thee, or haply shall Rumour,  
Daughter of Zeus, who on earth is the busiest bringer of tidings.

Firstly betake thee to Pylos, the godlike Nestor to question.

Thence seek Sparta, the court of the fair-haired prince Menelaus :

He was the last to return of the bronzen-coated Achaeans.

Shouldst thou be told of thy father as living and homeward returning,

Surely for one year more thou'lt bear with the waste of thy substance.

Should they report him as perished and gone from the land of the living,

Quickly return, and regaining the well-loved home of thy fathers

Straightway build him a tomb, and funeral offerings offer

Many and rich, as is meet, and thy mother bestow on a husband.

Then, when at last these things are duly fulfilled and accomplished,

Hold thou counsel at once with the thoughts and the feelings within thee

How to be quit of the suitors, and here in the hall of thy homestead

Slay them by craft or by open assault. No more it becoms thee

Childish thoughts to indulge, for thy age no longer is childish.

Surely thou know'st of the fame that was won by the noble Orestes :

How he is praised by the nations for killing his father's assassin,

Crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his sire, great King Agamemnon.

Also do thou, dear lad, as in form thou art comely and stalwart,

Show thee courageous and win thee a name in the age that is coming !

Now I am fain to descend once more to my swift-winged vessel,

Where are waiting my men, and, I doubt not, chafe at my absence.

Take thou thought for thyself and attend to the counsel I gave thee."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

" Verily, stranger, with kindly intent these words thou hast uttered,

Like to a father advising his son. I shall never forget them.

Yet, I beseech thee, remain, though eager to haste on thy journey !

Stay till refreshed with a bath, and the heart in thy bosom contented,

Back to thy ship thou returnest with gladness, bearing a present

Rare in its worth and its beauty—a present to keep as an heirloom ;

Such will I give thee—the gift of a friend to a friend that he loveth."

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

" Nay, no longer withhold me ! I yearn me away on my journey.

Touching thy present—whatever thy heart shall enjoin thee to give me—

Give it when back I am coming, to carry it straight to my homeland.

Choose it as rare as thou wilt ; it will gain thee another as goodly."

These words spoken, departed the grey-eyed goddess Athene,

Flitting away as a bird by the roof-hole. Deep in his bosom

Courage and manly resolve she had planted, and roused a remembrance

Keener than erst of his sire ; and he marked the emotion within him

Greatly astonished in spirit, suspecting a deity's presence.

Then to the suitors he went and the strength of a god was upon him.



Here was the minstrel beginning to sing, and the suitors in silence  
Listening sat ; and he sang of the homeward return of the Grecians,  
Pitiful story of woes inflicted by Pallas Athene.

Now in her upper apartment the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Daughter of Icarius, was aware of the wonderful singing.  
Straightway leaving her room by the high-built stair she descended ;  
Neither alone did she go ; two maidens followed behind her.  
So when at last she had come to the suitors, that fairest of women  
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment,  
Holding in front of her cheeks soft folds of her glistering head-dress.  
There as she stood, with a trusty attendant on this and on that side,  
Suddenly bursting in tears to the godlike bard she addressed her :  
“Phemius, many another enrapturing story thou knowest,  
Deeds of immortals and men—themes often by singers recounted.  
Such be thy song as thou sitt'st with the guests. Let them listen in silence  
Quaffing the wine. But desist, I beseech, from the strain thou art singing,  
Pitiful story, that ever the heart in the depths of my bosom  
Woundeth—for me hath befallen an inconsolable sorrow ;  
Such was the well-loved lord that I mourn—nor can ever forget him—  
One whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.”  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“Wherefore, mother, prevent that the sweet-voiced singer delight us  
E'en as his spirit is moved ? It is never the singer, believe me,  
Bringeth us bale ; it is Zeus that is guilty thereof ; he allotteth  
Every mortal that liveth on bread what fortune he willeth.  
Nor do I blame that he singeth the pitiful fates of the Argives,  
Seeing that ever by mortals the more extolled is a singer  
Singing the song that the newest resounds in the ears of the people.  
Therefore harden thy heart and thy mind with the courage to listen.  
’Twas not Odysseus alone that was reft of the day of returning  
Back from the Trojan land ; there perished many another.  
Now to thy chamber return and attend to thine own occupation,  
Even the loom and the distaff, and order thy maiden attendants  
Busily keep to their tasks ; we men will attend to the talking,  
All of us—chiefly myself ; it is I that am lord of the household.”  
Full of amazement she turned her to go to the women's apartment,  
Hiding the masterful words of her son deep down in her bosom.  
So to her upper apartment ascending with maiden attendants  
Here she lamented Odysseus her well-loved husband, till gently  
Slumber was poured on her lids by the grey-eyed goddess Athene.

Now in the shadowy hall loud clamour arose of the suitors,  
 Each one uttering prayers to the gods to possess her in marriage,  
 Till sage Telemachus spake out and began to address them:  
 "Hearken, my mother's suitors—outrageous and riotous brawlers!  
 Now let us fall to the feast and be merry—but boisterous uproar  
 Keep we afar! It is pleasant to list to the song of a minstrel  
 Such as this singer of mine; for in voice he is like an immortal.  
 Early to-morrow I ask you to come to the place of the council,  
 All of you. There shall I make you an open and plain declaration,  
 Bidding you quit these halls. Ye can seek your junketings elsewhere.  
 Feed on your own! Go feasting in turn each one with the other!  
 Should it however appear to your minds more pleasant and better  
 Thus to devour the possession of others, nor fear the avenger,  
 Waste as ye will!—but the gods everlasting I call to my succour,  
 Hoping that heaven will grant such deeds to receive retribution.  
 Then in this selfsame hall shall ye perish—and none shall avenge you."  
 Thus did he speak, and the men all biting their lips in amazement  
 marvelled at Telemachus and the valiant words he had spoken.  
 Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed him:  
 "Verily, Telemachus, it is heaven itself that hath taught thee  
 Such big blustering vaunts, such impudent boldness of language.  
 Never Cronion, I trust, would choose for the Ithacan island  
 Thee as a king—though truly thou claimest the right to inherit!"  
 Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
 "Antinous—and I trust at my words thou'lt never be angered—  
 E'en this honour—if offered by Zeus—I am ready to bear it.  
 Deemest thou ruling the worst of the evils that mortals inherit?  
 Nay—to be ruler is never an evil; for quickly the homestead  
 Richer and richer becomes and the man held higher in honour.  
 Many another however among the Achaeans is chieftain  
 Here in the rock-bound Ithacan isle, both aged and younger.  
 One of them haply will gain him the title—as dead is Odysseus.  
 But, for myself, I intend to be master and lord of my household,  
 Lord of my servants—of all that the sword of Odysseus hath won me."  
 Forthwith Polybus' son, Prince Eurymachus, made answer:  
 "Telemachus, on the knees of the gods everlasting it lieth  
 Who as the king of the Ithacan island shall rule the Achaeans.  
 Hold thou fast to thy own! be the master and lord of thy household!  
 Never shall any be found that shall venture with force to assail thee,  
 Seeking to ruin thy home—while Ithaca stands as a nation.  
 Now, good friend, I am fain to examine thee touching this stranger.

Whence arrived is the man? What folk doth he boast to belong to?  
Where is his land, and his kin? Where lies the domain of his homestead?  
Came he perchance some tidings to bring of thy father's returning?  
Travels he hither in hope some want of his own to provide for?  
How of a sudden he rose and was gone! in a moment was vanished,  
Ere we had made us acquainted! yet seemed not a churl in appearance!"  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Eurymachus, clean gone is the hope of my father's returning,  
Nor do I further believe in reports, where'er they may come from,  
Nor divination consider of aught—such tales as my mother  
Hears from the lips of diviners she calls to the house and examines.  
This is an ancient guest of my household. He cometh from Taphos.  
Mentes—such is his name. Of a wise-souled father he boasts him,  
Anchialus, and himself is the prince of the Taphian sea-folk."  
Thus did he speak; but he knew in his heart 'twas a goddess immortal.

Now to the joys of the dance and the pleasures of singing they turned them,  
Making them merry, and thus they awaited the coming of even;  
Nor was the merriment over when come was the darkness of even;  
Then at the last they departed to sleep, each one to his homestead.  
Telemachus, where fronting the fair-built court was his chamber  
(Built aloft was the room in a site with a beautiful prospect)  
Thither betook him to bed, while deep in his spirit he pondered.  
Thither with torches ablaze attended him also the trusty  
Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops, who was son of Pisenor.  
Once, long since, had Laertes expended his wealth to possess her,  
Then in her prime; and a score of his kine as the price he had given.  
Honour he gave her as much as his own true wife in the household;  
Nor did he make her his mistress; he shrank from the wrath of his consort.  
She was the servant that carried the torches to light him; she loved him  
More than the rest of the maids, and had served as the nurse to his childhood.  
Now so soon as the door of the fair-built chamber she opened,  
Seating him down on the bed, of his doublet soft he disrobed him;  
This to the hands of the careful and sage old dame he entrusted.  
She, when at length she had folded the tunic and skilfully smoothed it,  
Hanging it up on a peg at the side of his rich-carved bedstead,  
Went from the chamber, and pulling the door by the handle of silver  
Shut it and fastened it, drawing the bolt well home with the latch-string.  
Here for the livelong night, close covered with wrappings of sheep's wool,  
Lying he thought of the journey that Pallas Athena had plann'd him.



# ODYSSEY BOOK II

**N**OW when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Out of his bed uprising the well-loved son of Odysseus  
Donned his apparel, suspended the keen-edged sword from his shoulder,  
Under his smooth-skinned feet then tying his beautiful sandals  
Out of his chamber he came, as a god immortal in presence ;  
Nor did he further delay, but the clear-voiced heralds he ordered  
Unto a council to summon the long-haired sons of Achaea.  
These then made proclamation, and quickly they gathered together.

Now when they all had collected together and formed an assembly,  
Bearing a bronzen spear in his hand to the council he gat him,  
Neither alone did he go—by his fleet-paced dogs he was followed.  
Wondrous too was the grace that around him was shed by Athene,  
Making the people to marvel that saw him approach ; and the elders  
Yielded him place, and he sat him adown in the seat of his father.  
First then rising the hero Aegyptus began to address them ;  
Bowed was his body by age, but his mind held infinite knowledge.  
One of his well-loved sons with the godlike hero Odysseus  
Sailed in the hollow vessels to Ilium famed for its horses,  
Antiphus, skilled with the spear : he was slain by the terrible Cyclops,  
Caught in his cavern—the last that the monster had roasted and eaten.  
Though he possessed three others (the one with the suitors consorted,  
Eurynomus, and the two aye tended the fields of the homestead)  
Him howbeit he never forgot, but bewailed him and mourned him ;  
Ay and in tears as he thought of his son he arose to address them :  
“ Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter.  
Never was yet our meeting of council or session assembled  
Since that the noble Odysseus in hollow vessels departed.  
Who is it now that hath summoned us here ? who found it so urgent ?  
One of the younger among us perhaps, or one of the elders ?  
Would he perchance some tidings impart of the army returning—  
Tidings that first he hath learn'd and of which he can give us assurance ?  
Or for the weal of the state hath he aught to inform or advise us ?  
Sure it is some good man. Fair fortune attend him, and heaven  
Grant him a boon, fulfilling whatever his soul desireth ! ”

Thus did he speak, and rejoicing the well-loved son of Odysseus  
Took it as omen, nor seated remained, but intent to harangue them

Forth in the midst of the council he stood ; and at once was a sceptre  
 Placed in his hand by Pisenor, the herald expert and sagacious.  
 Then to the aged Aegyptus he turned, and first he addressed him :  
 "Sire, not afar is the man that thou seek'st ; right soon shalt thou see him.  
 He that hath summoned you hither am I—who am foremost in sorrow.  
 Neither, alas, is it news I impart of the army returning,  
 News that is come to me first, and of which I can give you assurance ;  
 Nor for the weal of the state is it aught I can tell or advise you.  
 No—it is mine own need.—On my home is calamity fallen  
 Twofold : firstly a sire right noble I mourn, who among you,  
 All of you here, was a monarch and lovingly ruled as a father.  
 Second, and worse, is an evil that soon on the whole of my homestead  
 Infinite ruin will bring, and my substance utterly squander :  
 Suitors I mean, who in spite of the wish of my mother annoy her,  
 (Some of them favourite sons of the noblest here in my presence)  
 Cowards, who fear to betake them at once to the house of her father  
 Icarius, who alone should settle the gifts for his daughter,  
 Yea and bestow her at will on the wooer that winneth his favour.  
 These now every day to the house come flocking, and daily  
 Slaughtering oxen and sheep and the fat-fed goats of the farmstead  
 Revel at feasts, and carousing and quaffing the fiery red wine,  
 Wantonly waste. Nigh all is consumed, nor still is a man there,  
 Such as Odysseus of yore, to avert this plague from the household.  
 We, all powerless now to avert it, await for the future  
 Truly a pitiful lot, and shall know not how to defend us.  
 Sooth, to defend me I lack not the will, had I only the power,  
 Since it is not to be borne what I suffer ; nor truly I deem it  
 Fair for my home to be ruined : yourselves should also resent it,  
 Ay and if only for shame that ye feel of the neighbouring nations  
 Dwelling around us—or else for the dread of the anger of heaven,  
 Lest in its wrath at the deeds ill done it shall send you reverses.  
 Now I petition you all by Olympian Zeus and by Justice,  
 Goddess that gathers together the councils of men and dissolves them,  
 Spare me, my friends ! Nay, leave me alone with my pain and my sorrow !  
 Leave me to mourn !—unless that my father, the noble Odysseus,  
 Acting in malice did ill to the well-greaved sons of Achaea,  
 Which to requite ye are treating me evilly, also in malice,  
 While these men ye abet. 'Twere verily more to my profit  
 Were it yourselves that consumed my paternal estate and my cattle !  
 Were it yourselves, right soon would compensation be offered ;  
 Else, in the streets of the town we had made an appeal and entreaty,



PENELOPEIA UNRAVELS HER WEB





Claiming amends, till the whole of the loss were duly repaid us.  
Now it is worse—on my heart ye inflict an incurable torture.”  
These words uttered, the sceptre he dashed to the ground in his anger,  
Bursting in tears, and the whole of the council was touched with compassion.

Then did the rest all silent remain, nor was any that ventured  
Telemachus to assail and to answer with words of resentment ;  
Antinous was the one who alone addressed him in answer :  
“Telemachus, big boaster, unbridled in temper—what prat’st thou,  
Thus to insult us and fasten the blame of the matter upon us ?  
’Tis not the princely Achaeans that wrong thee by wooing thy mother,  
Nay, ’tis that mother of thine, who in guile all women exceedeth.  
Past is already the third, and the fourth year soon will be passing,  
Since she began deluding the hearts of the noble Achaeans.  
All she befooleth with hopes, and she giveth her promise to each one,  
Sending them many a message ; but things quite other she longs for.  
Yea and besides in her heart this crafty device she hath plotted :  
Rearing a spacious loom in her hall, she betook her to weaving,  
Working a broad and a delicate web ; and anon she addressed us :  
‘Princes, who sue for my hand—since dead is the godlike Odysseus—  
Patiently wait, though eager to hasten my marriage, till fully  
Woven this web—lest vainly I forfeit the fruits of my spinning.  
Lo, ’tis a shroud for the hero Laertes, to wrap him, whenever  
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him ;  
Else in Achaea’s land might well some woman reproach me,  
Were he to lie, who possessed such riches, lacking a grave-cloth.’  
So did she speak and within us the valiant heart was persuaded.  
Thus then all of the day at the spacious loom she was weaving ;  
During the night she unravelled the web with her torches beside her.  
Three long years with her secret device she befooled the Achaeans ;  
Till, when the fourth year came, and as season was followed by season,  
Then at the last (since one of her women, who knew it, had told us),  
While at the loom her magnificent web she unravelled, we caught her.  
Thus was she forced, though sorely unwilling, to finish her labour.  
Thee such answer the suitors return—thou’lt soon understand it  
Turning it o’er in thy mind, and likewise all the Achaeans.  
Touching this mother of thine—dismiss her, and bid her to marry  
Whomsoever her father commands or that pleaseth her fancy.  
Should she however continue insulting the sons of Achaea,  
Using the arts in the which she is richly endowed by Athene,  
Deftness in exquisite work and the talent for cunning invention

—Ay and invention of guile—such guile as we never in old times  
 Hear of the fair-tressed wives or the daughters of ancient Achaeans,  
 Tyro or Alcmena or the fair-crowned lady Mycene—  
 None of them all had the clever devices that Penelopeia  
 Knoweth to practise—and here's a device not seemly, not decent !  
 Well—they will never desist consuming thy living and substance  
 While this woman retaineth the purpose that powers immortal  
 Plant in her bosom. A mighty renown for herself she is winning  
 Doubtless—but also for thee a regret for thy vanished riches.  
 Touching us suitors—we mean to betake us nor homeward nor elsewhere,  
 Till she has married the man that she chooses of all the Achaeans.”  
 Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
 “Antinous, it is nowise possible thus to eject her ;  
 She is the mother that bare me and reared me. My father is absent,  
 Dead or alive ; and amends right heavy—for me a disaster—  
 Icarius will demand, if I wilfully force her to leave me.  
 Nor from her father alone shall I suffer, for heaven will surely  
 Punish me worse when my mother shall call on the awful Erinyes,  
 Forced to depart from her home ; and of all mankind will the censure  
 Fall on my head. Thus, never and never the word will I utter.  
 Now for yourselves—if the spirit within you is wroth and indignant,  
 Well then, quit ye my halls ! Ye can seek your junketings elsewhere.  
 Feed on your own ! Go feasting in turn each one with the other !  
 Should it however appear to your minds more pleasant and better  
 Thus to devour the possessions of others, nor fear the avenger,  
 Waste as ye will ! But the gods everlasting I call to my succour,  
 Hoping that heaven will grant such deeds to receive retribution :  
 Then in this selfsame hall shall ye perish—and none shall avenge you.”  
 Thus pray'd Telemachus, and the Father who speaketh in thunder  
 Sent two eagles, that swooped from aloft, from the crest of a mountain.  
 Swift as the blast of a storm for a while came flying together  
 Both of them, each by the side of the other outspreading his pinions,  
 Till right over the place of the council and buzzing assembly  
 Suddenly wheeling they circled around and with many a flapping  
 Gazed in the faces of all with a glare foreboding destruction.  
 Then with his claws each clutched at the neck and the cheeks of the other,  
 Sweeping away to the right straight over the roofs of the city.  
 All in astonishment stared at the eagles, whenas they beheld them,  
 Wondering much in their hearts what things were destined to happen.  
 Then stood forth and addressed them the hero, old Halitherses,  
 Mastor's son, who alone of his age was surpassingly gifted

Birds to discern as a seer and tell the event that was coming.  
 Moved with a kindly intention he spake and addressed the assembly :  
 " Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter !  
 Chiefly I speak to the suitors—for them concern my predictions,  
 Since that on them there rolleth a mighty disaster : Odysseus  
 Now not long from his friends shall absent him, but even already  
 Near is at hand and is sowing for these their doom and destruction,  
 All of them—ay and on many another he bringeth disaster,  
 Many of us that inhabit the far-seen Ithaca. Come then,  
 Ere it befall let us counsel to end their mischief—themselves too,  
 See that they end it ! and truly the sooner they end it, the better.  
 Not as a fool unpractised I prophesy : sure is my knowledge.  
 Ay, I affirm, in regard to the man, that it all is accomplished,  
 All that I once foretold, when the Argive leaders embarked them,  
 Sailing for Troy—and together with these went cunning Odysseus.  
 ' Many a woe shall he suffer,' I said, ' and his comrades shall perish.  
 Then in the twentieth year he shall come, unknown, unexpected,  
 Back to his home.' Lo, all these things are finding fulfilment."  
 Forthwith Polybus' son, prince Eurymachus, made answer :  
 " Go to thy home, old gaffer, and prophesy there to thy children,  
 Lost peradventure on them some mighty disaster is rolling !  
 Touching this matter, methinks I can prophesy better than thou canst.  
 Many a feathered fowl in the sunlight spaces of heaven  
 Flutters about—nor do all bring augury. Dead is Odysseus,  
 Dead in a distant land. Had ye gone to perdition together  
 Well had it been, for thou ne'er hadst talked such folly as augur,  
 Nor hadst Telemachus thus further incited to anger,  
 Hoping a gift for thy house, I suppose—if he careth to give one.  
 Now will I speak to thee plainly a word that shall find a fulfilment :  
 While that a man like thee that is elder and wiser than others  
 Leadeth a younger astray with his words and incites him to anger,  
 First for the youngster himself far worse is the trouble he causeth,  
 (Ay and he ne'er will be able to help him because of the men here)  
 While for thyself, old man, we shall force thee to pay us a forfeit  
 Such as shall madden thy soul ; and a grievous pain it will cause thee.  
 Also to Telemachus this counsel I publicly offer :  
 Straight let him order his mother to go to the house of her father ;  
 There can her parents arrange for the wedding and settle the presents,  
 All of the wealth that is wont with a well-loved daughter to follow ;  
 Ere it be done, we shall never (believe me), we sons of Achaea,  
 Cease from this forcible wooing ; we fear not a mortal that liveth,

*Odyssey* Not e'en Telemachus—how fluent soever his tongue be.  
Nor do we hold divination for aught—of the which in thy dotage  
Emptily prating thou makest thyself still more to be hated.  
Yea, his estate shall be eaten to nothing, nor any requital  
Ever be made, till she cease with delays to befool the Achaeans  
Touching her marriage ;—and we meanwhile, all patiently waiting,  
Still for this fair perfection compete, forgetful of others,  
Leaving unsought such wives as a man might willingly wed with.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
“ Eurymachus and the rest of you high-born nobles and suitors,  
Touching this matter I cease to entreat ; no more will I utter.  
Known is already the truth to the gods and to all the Achaeans.  
Grant me howbeit a good swift vessel and twenty companions,  
Such as shall help to accomplish the voyaging thither and hither,  
Since I intend to betake me to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,  
Tidings to learn of my father's return who so long is unheard of.  
Haply an earth-born man shall inform me, or haply shall Rumour,  
Daughter of Zeus, who on earth is the busiest bringer of tidings.  
Should I be told of my father as living and homeward returning,  
Surely for one more year I can bear with the waste of my substance.  
Should they report him as perished and gone from the land of the living,  
Forthwith quickly regaining the well-loved home of my fathers,  
Here I shall build him a tomb and funeral offerings offer,  
Many and rich, as is meet, and my mother bestow on a husband.”  
These words spoken he sat him adown ; then rose to address them  
Mentor, once of the noble Odysseus a faithful companion.  
Him, when he sailed, did the hero entrust with the care of his homestead,  
Leaving the old man there to command in the house and protect it.  
Moved with a kindly intention he spake and addressed the assembly :  
“ Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter !  
Never be kindly affectioned again, nor loving and gentle,  
Any that beareth the sceptre as king, nor righteously minded !  
Nay, let him rather be hard and be cruel and practise injustice !  
So is it true that the godlike Odysseus by none is remembered,  
None of the people he governed and lovingly ruled as a father.  
'Tis not the arrogant suitors so much that I view with resentment,  
Though outrageous the deeds that they do with malicious intention,  
Since they imperil their heads, audaciously braving Odysseus,  
Eating his wealth, in belief that he ne'er shall return to the homeland.  
Nay, I am wroth far more with the rest of the people—with you here  
Silently sitting with never a word of rebuke for the suitors,

Never attempting to stay these few, though many ye number."

Him addressing replied Leiocritus, son of Euenor :

"Mentor, mischievous fool, where wander thy wits? and what prat'st thou,

Bidding them stop us? Methinks ye will find it a difficult matter

Fighting with men for a feast—and with men who exceed you in number.

E'en if Odysseus himself, your Ithacan hero, appearing

Found at the feast in his house the illustrious band of the suitors,

Were he to long in his spirit to drive us away from his mansion,

Verily little his wife would joy, despite of her yearnings,

Seeing him safely returned; for a doom disgraceful awaits him

Fighting with those that exceed him in number. 'Tis folly thou talkest.

Come now, all of you people, disperse, each man to his farmstead.

Touching this youth, Halitherses and Mentor shall see to his voyage,

Both of them being of yore good friends of the house of his father.

Natheless, long will he linger, I trow, exploring for tidings

Only in Ithaca island, and never accomplish the journey."

Thus he addressed them, and hastily all from the council dispersed them,

Scattering hither and thither, and each man went to his homestead,

All but the suitors—who went to the house of the godlike Odysseus.

Meantime Telemachus, to the beach of the ocean withdrawing,

Washed in the hoar salt water his hands, and he prayed to Athene :

"List, O thou who as god yestreen to the home of my fathers

Camest, and badest me traverse the mist-bound gulf of the ocean,

Tidings to seek of my father's return, who so long is unheard of :

Yea, thou badest me go, but Achaeans hinder my going,

Chiefly of all those men o'erweening and wicked, the suitors."

Thus as he uttered his prayer drew nigh him the goddess Athene,

Likened to Mentor in voice and also in bodily semblance.

Then did she open her lips, and with swift-winged words she addressed him :

"Telemachus, thou'lt prove not in future a fool or a coward,

Hast thou within thee a drop of the valiant blood of thy father—

Such was he ever at winning his purpose in word and in action—

Nor shall I fear that thy voyage be vain or be never accomplished ;

While if thou beest no son of Odysseus and Penelopeia,

Then can I nowise hope that thy wishes will find a fulfilment.

Seldom indeed is a son to be found who can rival his father ;

Most are worse—but it happens at times that the child is the better.

Nay but in future, I know, thou'lt prove not a fool or a coward,

Nor is the craft of Odysseus in thee so totally wanting ;

(O. 1789) Therefore good is my hope thou'lt bring these works to fulfilment.  
I Come, put away from thy mind the designs and the thoughts of the suitors,  
20 1. 81. Senseless fools that they are—yea, equally foolish and wicked—  
Unsuspecting of death and the darkness of doom that is rolling  
Nearer, to swallow them all on the selfsame day in perdition.  
Touching the journey thou longest to attempt, nought now shall delay it,  
Such is the friendship I feel for the son, as I felt for the father.  
Straight will I get thee a good swift ship, and will come as thy comrade.  
Now, I exhort thee, return to thy home and consort with the suitors.  
There for the journey prepare thy provision and stow it in vessels,  
Wine in the jars, white meal of the barley, the marrow of mortals,  
Packed in the well-sewn skins. Meantime will I levy as shipmates  
Those of the people that offer them gladly; and many a vessel  
Lies on the sea-girt island of Ithaca, newer and older;  
One of them first I shall choose—whichever appears to be fittest—  
Then we can quickly equip her and set her afloat on the ocean.”

These words uttered Athena, the daughter of Zeus, and incited  
Telemachus to depart; who, aware of the voice of the goddess,  
Went on his way to the palace with heart that was grievously troubled.  
Here in the halls of his home he discovered the arrogant suitors  
Busy with flaying of goats and with singeing of swine in the courtyard.  
Seeing him Antinous with a laugh came forward to meet him,  
Clasped him at once by the hand, and with accents of welcome addressed him:  
“Telemachus, big boaster, unbridled in temper, I pray thee,  
Nourish within no more such anger in word and in action!  
Come, let us see thee be merry and feast and carouse as aforetime!  
All these things, be assured, we Achaeans will duly attend to,  
Even a vessel and crew—picked rowers, to carry thee quickly  
Tidings to seek of the noble Odysseus in beautiful Pylos.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Antinous, I can never with boisterous brawlers as you be  
Peacefully sit at the board and delight me in quiet enjoyment.  
Were't not enough in the past to have wasted so many a treasure—  
Wasted so much of my riches, ye suitors, in days of my childhood?  
Now I am grown to a man, and I listen to all that is spoken,  
Listen and learn and, as stronger within me is waxing my spirit,  
Soon shall I try to excite doom's terrible furies against you,  
Whether I journey to Pylos or stay still here in my country.  
Nay, I shall go—nor in vain shall I go on the journey I speak of—  
Go as a passenger. Ne'er shall I get me a vessel or rowers



Granted by you : it is thus, I am sure, ye determined to treat me.”  
Speaking, he snatched full lightly his hand from the hand of the suitor  
Antinous ; but the rest, in the palace preparing a banquet,  
Seeing it, jeered and with words insulting disdainfully mocked him,  
While in their midst thus spake one insolent youth to another :  
“ Verily Telemachus is devising us death and destruction !  
Either from Pylos the sandy his friends he will bring to avenge him,  
Or from the city of Sparta ! He seemeth in terrible earnest !  
Else to the fertile fields of the Ephyran land he intendeth  
Straight to betake him, and thence some drug right deadly to fetch him,  
Poison, to cast in the bowl, that we all of us perish together.”  
Then in the midst made answer an insolent youth to the other :  
“ Ay, who knoweth ? perchance as he sails in his hollow vessel,  
Wandering far from his home, he will perish, as perished Odysseus.  
Were it to hap, ’twould make our troubles the more and the greater,  
Seeing that all of his goods ’twere need to divide, and the homestead  
Give to his mother to have and to hold with the man that she marries.”

Thus did they speak ; but he gat him adown to a room of his father’s  
Vaulted and broad, where piles were lying of gold and of copper,  
Garments also in chests and fragrant oil in abundance ;  
Many a cask moreover of wine sweet-savoured and ancient  
Stood there, holding within it a liquor divine, undiluted.  
Close to the wall and in order they stood, lest haply Odysseus  
Back to his home might come, all toils and sufferings ended.  
Doors close-fitting and furnished with locks were hung in the portals,  
Folding together, and here was a matron by night as by daytime  
Went to resort, who it all full wisely and carefully guarded,  
Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops, who was son of Pisenor.  
Her now Telemachus to the store-room called, and addressed her :  
“ Come, good mother, decant me a wine, I beseech thee, in wine-jars,  
Sweet—ay, even the choicest of all but the wine that thou keepest  
Mindful of him, ill-fated—if haply appearing from somewhere  
Godlike Odysseus shall come, escaping from doom and destruction.  
Fill me a dozen of jars and fit all closely with covers.  
Pour me as well fine barley in well-sewn wallets of leather.  
Twenty in all be the measures of meal of the mill-ground barley.  
Only thyself mayst know it. Let all be collected together.  
During the eveningtide I shall fetch it, as soon as my mother  
Unto her upper apartment ascends and prepares her for slumber,  
Since I intend to betake me to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,

Tidings to hear, if I may, or my well-loved father's returning."  
 Hearing the words he had spoken, the dear nurse Eurycleia  
 Uttered a woful lament, and with swift-winged words she addressed him :  
 " Why, ah why, in thy heart, dear child, should such an intention  
 Ever arise ? How canst thou be wishing to wander in far lands,  
 Thou the belov'd sole son of thy mother ? Afar from his country  
 Perished is godlike Odysseus amidst some people of strangers ;  
 Yea and as soon as thou goest the men will be plotting behind thee  
 How to destroy thee with guile and divide all these thy possessions.  
 Stay now quiet at home on thy lands. Sure, ne'er is it needful  
 Thus to go toiling and wandering off on the wastes of the ocean."  
 Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
 " Comfort thee, nurse ; not without God's will is the thing that I purpose.  
 Now come swear to me nought to reveal to my mother beloved  
 Ere that of days not less than eleven or twelve shall be ended  
 (Save that she miss me before and shall ask and shall learn my departure),  
 Lest she lament me with tears and her fair face mar with her weeping."  
 Then by the oath that is mighty among the immortals she sware it.  
 So when at last she had given her oath and had finished the plighting,  
 Straight did the dear old mother decant him the wine in the wine-jars,  
 Packed him besides fine barley in well-sewn wallets of leather.  
 Telemachus then returned to the house to consort with the suitors.

Other was now the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene.  
 Likened to Telemachus through all of the city she hastened  
 Seeking the men ; and each she accosted imparting her orders,  
 Bidding them come to the good swift ship at the fall of the even.  
 Also to Phronius' son she addressed her, the famous Noëmon,  
 Begging a swift-winged ship ; and he willingly promised to lend one.  
 So when the even was come and darkened was every roadway,  
 Down to the salt sea water the vessel they hauled, and aboard her  
 All of the tackle they shipped that by well-decked vessels is carried.  
 Then was she moored by the point of the bay, and the stalwart rowers  
 Gathered aboard, each urged to his work by the voice of the goddess.

Planning another device did the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
 Forthwith go on her way to the palace of godlike Odysseus ;  
 Here a delightsome slumber she shed on the eyes of the suitors,  
 Dazing them so that the wine-cups dropt from the hands of the drinkers.  
 Soon to the town they departed to lay them to slumber, unable  
 Still at the banquet to sit, since drowsiness fell on their eyelids.



Calling to Telemachus did the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Summon him forth from the midst of the fair-built halls of the mansion,  
Likened to Mentor in voice and also in bodily semblance :  
“ Come now, Telemachus—for already thy well-greaved shipmates  
Sit at the oar, and for nought are waiting but thee to despatch them.  
Come, let us quickly be gone, nor longer delay them from starting.”  
These words uttered, at once went forward Pallas Athene,  
Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the goddess.  
Now when at last they had gotten them down to the sea and the vessel,  
Here on the strand of the ocean the long-haired youths they discovered ;  
These prince Telemachus as their lord and their leader accosted :  
“ Hither, my friends ! let us fetch the provisions. Already together  
All at the house is collected. My mother with nought is acquainted,  
Neither the others—the maids ; one only I told of my purpose.”  
These words uttered, he guided them forward ; they following after  
Fetched the provisions and bringing them all to the well-decked vessel  
Stowed them aboard at the hest of the well-loved son of Odysseus.  
Then did he mount on the ship, and before him Athena embarking  
Sat her adown at the stern of the vessel, and near to the goddess  
Telemachus took seat ; and the shipmates loosing the cables  
Mounted the vessel themselves and sat them adown on the benches.  
Sent was a fair stern-wind by the grey-eyed goddess Athene,  
Blustering Zephyr, that roars as he sweepeth the wine-dark ocean.  
Then called Telemachus to his men and exhorted and bade them  
Set their hands to the gear ; and they set them to work as he urged them.  
Raising the pine-wood mast to its height, in the notch of the cross-bar  
Firmly they fixed it, and bracing it taut to the prow with the forestays  
Hoisted the fair white sails with the ropes tight-twisted of oxhide.  
Struck was the midst of the sail by the wind, and the purpling billow  
Shouted in front of the prow as she moved on her way in the waters  
Over the waves of the ocean, rejoicing her course to accomplish.  
Now in the swift black vessel when all of the gear they had fastened,  
Setting them bowls for the mixing of wine full-brimming with liquor  
Unto the gods immortal, eternal, they offered libation,  
Chiefly the grey-eyed goddess, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty.  
Thus then all of the night and into the dawn she was speeding.



# ODYSSEY BOOK III

**T**HEN, as the sun rushed up from the beautiful lake of the ocean  
Into a heaven of brass and brought back light for immortals,  
Yea and for mortals that live on the earth, rich giver of harvests,  
Unto the Pylia city they came, strong castle of Neleus.  
Here on the shore of the ocean the people had slain as oblation

Bulls all black to the blue-haired god, Earth-shaking Poseidon.  
Companies nine were there, five hundred seated in each one  
Feasting, and nine of the bulls each company kept for a portion.  
Busy were all with the tasting of livers and burning of thigh-bones  
While to the land these bore with their well-built vessel, and straightway  
Striking the canvas they brailed it aloft; and they moored her and landed.  
Out of her Telemachus stepped down, and before him Athene.

First then breaking the silence the grey-eyed goddess addressed him:

“Telemachus, no need is at hand, not the least, to be bashful.

Even for this thou hast traversed the ocean—to hear of thy father,  
What land hideth his bones and what was the doom he encountered.

Come now, straightly address thee to Nestor, the tamer of horses,

So shall we learn what counsel he holdeth concealed in his bosom.

Come and entreat him thyself, and the whole of the truth he will tell thee;

Ne’er will he speak what is false; right wise is the heart of the hero.”

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer:

“Mentor, how shall I venture to go—how dare to salute him?

Never as yet was I practised at all in the art of a speaker;

Ay and a youth feels bashful to question a man that is older.”

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:

“Telemachus, some thoughts thou’lt find in the depths of thy bosom,

Some will be sent by a god, since never and never (I know it)

Save by the will of the gods thou wast born and art come to thy manhood.”

These words uttered, at once went forward Pallas Athene

Hastily leading the way; and he followed the steps of the goddess.

Soon to the throng close-seated they came of the Pylia people.

Here in the midst with his sons sat Nestor; round him his comrades

Roasting or spitting the flesh were busy preparing the banquet.

These, when the strangers they saw, came hurrying eagerly forward,

Hands outstretching in welcome and bidding them both to be seated.

Foremost was Nestor’s son Peisistratus; close he approached them,

Welcomed them both with the hand and gave them as seats at the banquet

( 11/1000/1 ) Thick soft fleeces that lay on the sand of the salt sea water,  
( 11 ) Close by the side of his sire and his brother the prince Thrasydes.  
( 11/1000/1 ) Portions before them he set of the entrail meat, and he poured them  
Wine in a goblet of gold, and he pledged them a welcome, addressing  
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis :  
“Offer a prayer, O guest, to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Since to the god of the sea is the feast that ye chance to arrive at.  
Pour thy libation and offer thy prayer, as the custom ordaineth ;  
Then this goblet of wine honey-sweet pass on to thy comrade  
Bidding him make a libation and pray—and I doubt not that he too  
Prays to the gods everlasting ; for gods are needed by all men.  
Younger however he seemeth—in years far rather my equal ;  
Wherefore first to thyself do I offer the cup of libation.”

These words spoken, the goblet of wine sweet-savoured he tendered.  
Much did Athena rejoice at the stripling's wisdom and judgment,  
First to herself that he offered the gold-wrought cup of libation ;  
Fervently then did she utter a prayer to the god of the ocean :  
“Hear me, Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, hear me ! Refuse not  
Answer to this our prayer ! grant all these things a fulfilment !  
Firstly to Nestor himself and his sons give glory and honour,  
Then to the rest vouchsafe—to the whole of the Pylian people—  
Favour and grace in requital of this their splendid oblation.  
Us too grant that we safely return, when it all is accomplished,  
All, for the winning of which we are come in the swift black vessel.”  
Thus as she prayed, of herself she was bringing it all to fulfilment.  
Then from the goddess receiving the two-cupped beautiful goblet  
Prayed in the selfsame manner the well-loved son of Odysseus.

Now when the outside meat they had roasted and drawn from the skewers,  
All they apportioned and sat them adown to a glorious banquet,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Then he addressed them, the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :  
“Now is a moment befitting to ask and to question the strangers  
Touching themselves—for they now are fully contented with feasting.  
Friends, come tell of yourselves. Whence sail ye the paths of the waters ?  
Come ye to chaffer for gain, or recklessly roaming at random  
Like to the pirates and rovers that wander and rob on the ocean,  
Setting their lives on the hazard in bringing disaster on others ?”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer ;  
Boldly he spake, for Athena herself in his bosom had planted  
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Courage to ask of his sire who was vanished so long from his homeland,  
Yea and honour and glory to win in the land of the living :  
“ Nestor, Neleus’ son, great glory of all the Achaeans,  
Whence we arrive thou hast asked me. Behold, I will tell thee exactly.  
Hither we came from the Ithacan isle ’neath Neion’s headland.  
This is a quest of my own, not a matter that toucheth the people.  
Following far-spread rumour I journey in search of my father,  
Even of godlike Odysseus the brave, who, they tell me, aforetime  
Stood at thy side in the battle and plundered the Ilian city.  
Now of the rest of the heroes, as many as warred with the Trojans,  
Tidings we hear, where any a pitiful doom hath encountered,  
While for the fate of my sire—it is kept untold by Cronion :  
None hath the power to say quite certainly where he is perished,  
Whether by hostile tribes overwhelmed he was slain on the dry land,  
Whether he lies in the depths mid the billows of Amphitrite.  
Wherefore now to thy knees I am come, in the hope thou art willing  
News of his pitiful death to impart, if perchance thou beheldest it  
Even with thine own eyes, or hast heard some tale from another,  
One who has wandered—for destined to ill from his birth was Odysseus.  
Nor do thou shrink to offend, nor speak soft words in compassion ;  
Tell me exactly the truth—how far thou hast chanced to behold him.  
Lo, I entreat thee—if ever my father, the noble Odysseus,  
Either by word or by action accomplished the thing that he promised  
Where in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction,  
This, I beseech thee, remember, and tell me the whole as it happened.”  
Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :  
“ Ah, dear friend, thou recallest the sorrows that once in the distant  
Trojan land we endured, the invincible sons of Achaea—  
All those toils that we suffered in ships on the mist-bound ocean,  
Seeking for spoil wherever Achilles was wishful to lead us.  
How too fighting in front of the strong-built city of Priam  
Battle we waged. Here fell of Achaeans the best and the bravest ;  
Here lies Ajax, the equal of Ares ; here is Achilles,  
Here Patroclus, in counsel a peer of the gods everlasting ;  
Here too lieth my son, my beloved, the strong and the noble  
Antilochus, who with fleetness excelled in the race and the battle :  
Ay and besides all this, what travail unending we suffered—  
Where is the mortal on earth to be found that can fully relate it ?  
Even for five whole years, or for six, ’twere vain to abide here  
Asking to hear of the woes once borne by the noble Achaeans ;  
Ere it was told, outwearied, I ween, thou’dst sail for thy homeland.

*Odyssey* Nine years warring at Troy did we busily scheme for its downfall,  
Weaving a tissue of wiles, which Zeus scarce granted fulfilment.  
There might never another with him in devices of wisdom  
Dare to compete, since far he surpassed all others in cunning,  
Godlike Odysseus I mean, ay even thy father—if truly  
He was thy sire; and amazement possesseth me while I behold thee,  
Seeing that verily even in speech thou art like him, nor would one  
Say that a man so young could speak so like to an elder.  
All these years have never myself and the godlike Odysseus  
Spoken diversely at meetings of men or the councils of chieftains;  
Ever we held one mind, and with counsels of prudence and wisdom  
Planned for the Greeks that it all might turn to the highest advantage.  
Yet, when at last we had wasted the high-built city of Priam,  
After from thence we had sailed and a god had dispersed the Achaeans,  
Then in his heart did the Father a terrible homeward returning  
Plot for them, seeing that neither with wisdom at all nor with justice  
Most of them acted; and many encountered a doom right doleful,  
Whelmed by the wrath of the grey-eyed daughter of Zeus the Almighty;  
Yea, it was she that the quarrel excited between the Atridae;  
These then called to the place of assembly the host of Achaeans  
Hurriedly, all in disorderly haste, when the sun was a-sinking.  
Heavy with wine they collected together, the sons of Achaea.  
Both then spake of the reason for which they had summoned the people;  
First Menelaus addressed him to all the Achaeans and bade them  
Think of the homeward return o'er broad expanses of ocean;  
Nor pleased this Agamemnon at all, for he ordered the people  
Still to remain and sacred oblations of cattle to offer,  
Thus to appease by atonement the terrible wrath of Athene,  
Fool that he was, not knowing she ne'er would list to persuasion,  
Seeing that lightly is turned not the mind of the gods everlasting.  
Thus then violent words exchanging the one with the other  
Stood these two; but the host of the well-greaved sons of Achaea  
Rose with a terrible din, and in twain was divided the council.  
All that night did we lie and with hearts indignant we brooded,  
Angered the one with the other; for Zeus our ruin was planning;  
Then, at the dawn, down dragging the ships to the vast salt ocean  
Straight we embarked our spoil, deep-girdled women and chattels,  
While that a half of the host hung back, and remaining encamped there  
Kept with the King Agamemnon Atrides, as sheep with a shepherd.  
Thus then half of us mounted the vessels, and rowing them swiftly  
Voyaged—for calmed by a god was the ocean that teemeth with monsters.

Landing on Ténédos island we made to the gods an oblation,  
Yearning for home ; but the Father of heaven had planned to prevent it,  
Pitiless god, who aroused once more fierce quarrels amongst us.  
Some then turning again their twy-beaked galleys departed,  
Even the wise and the wary Odysseus with all of his comrades,  
Taking the part once more of the King Agamemnon Atrides.  
Then with the rest of my ships all following closely behind me  
Thence did I flee ; for I saw that a deity plotted us evil ;  
Fled too, rousing his mates, Tydides equal of Ares.  
Following later behind us the fair-haired prince Menelaus  
Found us in Lesbos arrived, and the long sea-voyage debating,  
Whether to steer for the sea from the coast of precipitous Chios,  
Making the Psyrian isle, and keeping the island to larboard,  
Or to the landward of Chios to hold by tempestuous Mimas ;  
This we entreated the god to declare by an omen, and giving  
Manifest answer he bade us the midmost sea to Euboea  
Boldly to cross and escape by the path that was shortest from peril.  
Then did a stern-wind shrilling arise, and it blew, and the vessels  
Speedily traversed the realm of the fishes, until at Geraestus  
During the night they arrived ; and we offered of bulls to Poseidon  
Many a thigh, since crossed was a mighty expanse of the ocean.  
Four days after at Argos a part of the gallant squadron,  
Vessels of Tydeus' son, Diomedes, tamer of horses,  
Anchored ; but onward for Pylos I held, and the favouring stern-wind  
Never was quenched from the day that a deity sent it to waft us.  
Thus I arrived, dear child, not knowing what happed, and I learnt not  
Aught of the rest—who safely returned, who perished returning ;  
Only the rumours I hear as I sit in the hall of my palace ;  
These, as is right, will I tell to thee fully, and hide from thee nothing.  
Safely, they say, came home the ferocious Myrmidon spearmen,  
Led by the glorious son of the dauntless-hearted Achilles ;  
Safely returned Philoctètes, the far-famed offspring of Poias ;  
Likewise Idomeneus gained Creta with all his companions,  
All that escaped from the war—since none were reft by the ocean.  
What was the fate of Atrides ye know, though far is your homeland—  
How he returned, and his death was so cruelly planned by Aegisthus :  
Ay but Aegisthus himself was repaid in a terrible manner.  
So is it always good for a son to be left when a mortal  
Perisheth ; even as here 'twas the son of the slain that avenged him,  
Killing the crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his glorious father.  
Also do thou, dear lad (as in form thou art comely and stalwart),



*Odysseus* Show thee courageous, and win thee a name in the age that is coming."

*Him* sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Nestor, Neleus' son, great glory of all the Achaeans,  
Grandly indeed did he wreak his revenge, and the land of Achaea,  
Ever shall spread his renown till it reach unborn generations.  
Would that the gods might will with a strength like his to endure me  
Thus to repay these suitors for all their cruel transgressions,  
All the infatuate deeds that they wickedly scheme for my ruin.  
Ah but, alas, not such is the fortune that destiny spun us,  
Me and my father ! Whatever befalls, it is needful to bear it."

Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :

"Now that thy words, dear friend, have waked in my mind a remembrance,  
Truly they tell me that suitors who woo for thy mother in numbers  
Throng to thy palace and do thee despite, devising thy ruin.  
Say, dost thou willingly suffer the insult? or else do the people  
There in thy country dislike thee, obeying a warning from heaven?  
Yet—who knows?—he can come and requite this iniquitous outrage,  
Either appearing alone or with all of the host of Achaea.  
Ah ! were only the will of the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Thee such love to vouchsafe as she granted the famous Odysseus  
Erst in the Trojan land, where many afflictions we suffered !  
(Never in sooth did I see such visible favour of heaven  
Such as the manifest aid he was given by Pallas Athene.)

Were it but only her will such favouring love to vouchsafe thee,  
Some of the suitors, methinks, would grow forgetful of wedlock."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Sire, not yet, do I fear me, will this thou hast said be accomplished :  
Great is the import thereof; awe filleth my heart, and unhopd for  
Were the event, should even the gods permit it to happen."

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

"Telemachus, what word by the door of thy lips hath escaped thee !  
Easily e'en from afar can a god, if he wishes, restore one.

I for myself would choose full many a toil and affliction,  
Ere that I won me a day of return and arrived at my homeland,  
Rather than come and be slain at my hearth, like King Agamemnon  
Craftily trapped to his death by his wife and the traitor Aegisthus.  
Truly not even the gods have power, though much they may love him,  
Death that is common to all to defend from a mortal, whenever  
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Mentor, hereof let us cease to debate ; let us sorrow in silence.



Never shall this prove true ; he shall never return ; for already  
Planned by the deathless gods is his doom ; death's darkness awaits him.  
Now I am wishful to turn to a theme far other and question  
Nestor, who all surpasseth in wise discernment and counsel,  
Since, it is said, he hath reigned through three generations of mortals ;  
Yea and he seemeth indeed in appearance like an immortal.  
Nestor, Neleus' son, I beseech thee, relate to me truly,  
How was Atrides slain, wide-governing King Agamemnon ?  
Where meanwhile was the prince Menelaus ? and how did Aegisthus  
Use such craft as to murder a man so greatly the stronger ?  
Say, was the prince not there, in Achaea and Argos, but elsewhere  
Wandering over the world, when the bold foul crime was accomplished ?"  
Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :  
" Well then listen, my son, while all of the truth I relate thee.  
E'en of thyself canst clearly conceive what end had befallen  
Had but the other Atrides, the fair-haired prince Menelaus,  
Coming from Troy discovered Aegisthus alive in the palace :  
Verily over the corse of the dead no earth had they scattered ;  
Dogs and the ravening fowls of the heaven had torn it to pieces,  
Cast from the city afar on the plain ; of the women of Argos  
None had bewailed him ; for truly a terrible deed he committed.  
While in a far-off land enduring so many a hardship  
Troy we besieged, in his idle retreat mid the meadows of Argos  
Aye with his flattering words Agamemnon's wife he was tempting.  
Now at the first she rejected the shameless deed he suggested,  
Fair Clytemnestra ; for good was the heart that she bare in her bosom.  
Yea and moreover at court was a bard, whom King Agamemnon  
Sailing for Troy had enjoined full straitly to tend on his consort.  
Yet, when at last by the will of the gods was determined her ruin,  
Then did Aegisthus removing the bard to a desolate island  
Leave him to furnish a spoil and a feast to the birds of the heaven :  
Her to his home as a lover he led, and she willingly followed.  
Many a fat ox-thigh did he burn at the shrines of immortals,  
Many a rich-worked web and a treasure of gold he suspended,  
Now that the deed was fulfilled that his heart ne'er ventured to hope for.  
Meantime homeward returning from Troy were sailing together  
I and Atrides the king, our fleets consorted in friendship.  
Sunium's cape we had reached, high hallowed headland of Athens ;  
Here was the pilot of prince Menelaus by Phoebus Apollo  
Stricken with painless shafts which smote him and suddenly slew him,  
E'en as the rudder he held and swiftly was speeding the vessel,

Phrontis Onétorides, who surpassed all mortals as helmsman  
Vessels to pilot when storms came suddenly sweeping upon them.  
Thus was the prince held back, though eager to haste on the journey,  
Wishing his mate to inter and with funeral rites to bewail him.  
Hence he at last set sail and, over the wine-dark ocean  
Steering his hollow ships, to the mountainous cape of Malea  
Straightly he ran ; but a course right wretched the god of the thunder  
Shaped for him then ; outpouring the shrill-voiced blast of the storm-wind,  
Rollers he sent upsurging aloft and enormous as mountains.  
Sundered in twain was the fleet : some drave to the island of Creta,  
Where the Cydonian race by the streams of Iardanus dwelleth.  
Here is a smooth and precipitous rock confronting the ocean  
Out in the mist-bound deep on the uttermost borders of Gortyn,  
Where, on the left of the cape, great rollers aroused by the south wind  
Sweep upon Phaestus, and small is the rock-spit barring the surges.  
Hither arriving with half of the fleet were saved from destruction  
Hardly the crews ; while hurled on the sharp-edged crags by the rollers  
Perished the ships. Five others—the rest of his blue-prow'd vessels—  
Carried away by the waves and the wind were drifted to Egypt.  
Here did he gain much wealth, and a treasure of gold he collected,  
Wandering thus with his ships midst nations of barbarous language.  
Meanwhile plotted Aegisthus at home his iniquitous treason,  
Murdered Atrides and bowed to subjection beneath him the people.  
Thus seven years did he reign mid the treasures of golden Mycenae ;  
Then, in the eighth, o'ertook him his doom, for the godlike Orestes  
Back from the city of Athens returned—and he slew the assassin,  
Crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his sire, great King Agamemnon.  
Now, when the slaying was done, and a funeral feast to the Argives  
O'er his detestable mother he gave and the craven Aegisthus,  
Lo, on the selfsame day Menelaus good at the war-cry  
Landed, and many a treasure he brought as the freight of his vessels.  
Ay and, my friend, take care, nor long from thy country absent thee,  
Leaving possessions behind, and strangers too in thy homestead,  
Mortals outrageous as these, lest parting thy substance among them  
All of thy wealth they devour, and vain prove also thy journey.  
Rather I earnestly bid and exhort that to prince Menelaus  
Straight thou proceed ; for a short while since he returned from a far land,  
Ay from a country of men whence none might dream in his spirit  
E'er to return, had the blasts of the storm once forced him to wander  
Into a sea so mighty that even the birds of the heaven  
Not in a year may traverse the vast and terrible water.

Come, set forth with thy vessel at once and thy comrades; or wilt thou  
Rather by land, I will lend thee a chariot gladly and horses,  
Ay and my sons will be ready, I know it, as guides to escort thee  
Unto divine Lacedaemon to find fair-haired Menelaus;  
Yea and thyself shalt entreat him the whole of the truth to reveal thee;  
Ne'er will he speak what is false; right wise is the heart of the hero."

Ere he had ended the sun sank down and the gloom was approaching.  
Then from the midst of them answered the grey-eyed goddess Athene:  
"Verily, sire, right well were all these matters related.  
Now let us order the tongues to be sliced and the wine to be mingled;  
So shall we unto Poseidon and all of the other immortals  
Offer libation, and then shall bethink us of sleep—for 'tis bed-time;  
Sunk is already the day in the gloom of the west, nor beseems it  
Longer to sit at a feast of the gods, but to think of departure."  
Thus she addressed them, the daughter of Zeus. To her words they attended.  
Over the hands of the feasters the water was poured by the henchmen,  
While that the youths wreathed high with the foaming liquor the wine-bowls.  
Then, when to each they had handed a wine-cup primed for libation,  
Casting the tongues in the flames they arose and poured it upon them.  
So when at last they had poured and had drunk to their hearts' satisfaction,  
Then did Athena and also the godlike son of Odysseus  
Both of them wish to be gone and return to the hollow vessel;  
Nestor however with words of persuasion attempted to stay them:  
"Father Zeus and all of the gods everlasting forbend it!  
Ne'er will I let you depart to the swift-winged vessel, and treat me  
Like to a man whose house quite lacketh in raiment—a pauper—  
One that has got no rugs in his home nor plenty of blankets  
Both for the use of himself and his guests—soft bedding to sleep in.  
Nay, I possess in my house both wrappers and beautiful blankets,  
Nor shall the well-loved son, by my troth, of a man as Odysseus  
Sleep on the deck of a ship while yet in the land of the living  
Still I exist, or a son or a daughter be left in my palace  
Strangers to welcome as guests, should ever they chance to arrive here."  
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:  
"Well is it spoken in sooth, dear father, and well it beseemeth  
Telemachus to obey, since thus 'twere certainly better.  
Wherefore now let him forth hence and repose till the morning  
There in the halls of thy palace; but I to the black-hulled vessel  
Mean to return, to inspirit my mates and to bring them the tidings,  
Being the one of the crew that alone might claim to be elder,

*Odyssey* Since that the others, the striplings that follow as friends and as shipmates,

III All are equals in age of the high-souled son of Odysseus.

200-201 Then I shall lay me to rest by the side of the black-hulled vessel  
Just for the night, and at dawn to the bold Cauconian people  
Mean to depart, to collect me a debt now owing a long time,  
Neither a trifle. But him take back to thy home, and to-morrow  
Send in a car with thy son as a guide, and provide him with horses,  
Even the swiftest of all of thy steeds and the best at endurance."

These words spoken, departed the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Likened in form to an osprey; and all were filled with amazement,  
Yea and the long-lived king was astonished whenas he beheld it.  
Grasping the hand of the son of Odysseus he hailed and addressed him:  
"Truly, my friend, thou'lt prove as a man not a coward or weakling,  
Seeing that e'en in thy youth thou'rt thus by immortals attended.  
Surely was this, of the gods that inhabit Olympian mansions,  
None but the daughter of Zeus, most glorious Tritogeneia,  
Even the goddess that honoured thy valiant sire mid the Argives.  
Grant me thy grace, O queen! Fair fame vouchsafe, I beseech thee,  
Unto myself and my sons and my honoured and well-loved consort;  
So shall I offer thee, goddess, a broad-brow'd heifer, a yearling  
Still unbroken nor yet brought under the yoke by the ploughman;  
Such is the victim I promise to slay, and her horns shall be gilded."  
Thus did he speak, and his prayer was accepted by Pallas Athene.  
Then uprising the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor  
Led to his beautiful palace his sons and his daughters' husbands.

Now when at length they had come to the far-famed halls of the chieftain,  
All of them sat them in order adown on the couches and armchairs,  
Then by the ancient monarch was mixed for his guests in a wine-bowl  
Wine sweet-savoured: eleven the years it had stood in the store-room  
Ere that the matron had opened the jar, unloosing its cover;  
Such was the wine that he mixed in the crater, and making libation  
Prayed to Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.  
So when at last they had poured and had drunk to their hearts' satisfaction,  
All of the others departed to sleep, each one to his homestead,  
All save Telemachus, dear son of the godlike Odysseus:  
Him gave lodgment the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor  
Under the echoing porch, on a bedstead with beautiful carvings,  
Next to that spearman renown'd, Peisistratus, leader of heroes,  
Sole of his sons still left an unmarried youth in the palace.

Then did he lay him to rest in the innermost room of the mansion,  
Where was arrayed by the lady his wife their bedding and bedstead.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Hastily roused him the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor.  
Issuing forth from his palace he sat on the polished stonework,  
Where in the front of the high house-door were benches of marble  
White and gleaming with unguent, whereon was accustomed aforesometimes  
Neleus oft to recline, that peer of immortals in counsel.  
Neleus long since mastered by Fate had departed to Hades ;  
Now sat there Gerenian Nestor, Achaea's defender,  
Holding his sceptre, and round him his sons came thronging together  
Issuing forth each one from his room, Stratius and Echephron,  
Perseus and Arétus and the equal of gods Thrasymedes.  
These as the sixth the heroic and young Peisistratus followed,  
Bringing the godlike Telemachus ; and they set him beside them.  
Then brake silence the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :  
“Haste ye, I pray, dear sons, and quickly accomplish my longing ;  
Firstly of all will I sue for the grace of the goddess Athene,  
Since at my bountiful feast to the god she was visibly present.  
One of you go to the plain for a heifer, and see that she quickly  
Hither be brought. Let a herd of the cattle be ordered to drive her.  
One to the black-hulled vessel of Telemachus great-hearted  
Hasten, to summon his mates, and let twain of them only remain there.  
Then let another at once go order Laërces the goldsmith  
Hither to come for the purpose of gilding the horns of the heifer.  
All of you others remain here closely and send to the handmaids ;  
Bid them to spread us a feast in the far-famed hall of the palace,  
Also to hand round chairs and to bring bright water and fuel.”  
So when he spoke all hastened to work ; soon come was the heifer  
Out of the plain ; soon came from the swift-winged well-built vessel  
Comrades of Telemachus great-hearted ; and come was the smith too  
Bearing the tools of his craft in his hands and his smithy utensils,  
Even the anvil and hammer and pincers of delicate fabric,  
Made for the working of gold ; came also the goddess Athene,  
Fain to receive the oblation ; and old Gerenian Nestor  
Gave to Laërces the gold, and he gilded the horns of the heifer  
Skilfully, making the goddess rejoice at the beautiful victim.  
Leading the cow by the horns now came Stratius and Echephron ;  
Water besides for the hands in a basin with flowery carvings  
Arétus bare forth from a room ; in his left was a basket

*Odyssey* Holding the groats of the corn ; Thrasymedes steadfast in battle  
III Stood with his sharp-edged axe by the cow, all ready to fell her ;  
112-119 Perseus lifted the bowl for the blood, while Nestor the aged  
Opened the rites with ablution and sprinkled the grain, to Athene  
Ardently praying, and cast in the flames as an earnest the forelock.

Now when at last were ended the prayers and the barley was sprinkled,  
Instantly Nestor's son, high-spirited prince Thrasymedes,  
Stepping anigh smote home with the axe : on the nape it descended  
Cutting the tendons, and loosened the might of the heifer ; and wailing  
Rose from the women, the wives of the sons and the consort of Nestor,  
Eurydice, who of prince Clymenus was the first-born daughter.  
Then from the wide-way'd earth they uplifted the head of the victim  
Baring the throat, and the leader of men Peisistratus cut it.  
Out of it flowed black blood ; from the bones departed the spirit.  
Soon was the body dismembered, and cutting the meat from the thigh-bones  
All of it duly they sliced and covered it over with caul-fat,  
Making it double, and laid at the top raw chunks of the carcass.  
This did the old king burn on the billets, and fiery red wine  
Over it poured ; and with five-pronged forks stood striplings beside him.  
Now when the meat of the thighs was consumed and the liver was eaten,  
Chopping the rest of it small on the skewers they spitted the pieces ;  
Then with the long sharp spits in their hands they began with the roasting.  
Meantime bathed was the son of Odysseus by fair Polycaste,  
Latest-born of the daughters of old Neleïan Nestor.  
So when at length he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
Round him she cast fair raiment—a beautiful mantle and doublet ;  
Out of the bath then stepping, in semblance like an immortal,  
Down by the prince of the people, the old King Nestor, he sat him.  
So when the outside meat they had roasted and drawn from the skewers,  
Sitting them down they partook of the banquet ; and nobles as henchmen  
Served them and carried the wine in the goblets of gold to the feasters.

Now when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Thus brake silence the warrior-knight, Gerenian Nestor :  
“Sons, come send for the car and the fair-maned horses, and quickly  
Yoke them, that Telemachus may forthwith fare on his journey.”  
Thus did he speak, and they gave good heed to his words and obeyed him ;  
Unto a car they attached full quickly the fleet-paced horses,  
Also provisions of bread and of wine were stowed by the house-dame,  
Relishes too—such food as is eaten by Zeus-loved princes.





TELEMACHUS AND PEISISTRATUS ARRIVE AT LACEDAEMON





Forthwith Telemachus on the beautiful chariot mounted,  
Also that leader of men Peisistratus, offspring of Nestor,  
Into the car upmounted beside him, and grasping the rein-straps  
Whipped to a start, and the horses at once right willingly cantered  
Down to the plain, soon leaving the steep-built city of Pylos,  
Then for the whole of the day kept shaking the yoke on their shoulders,  
Till, when the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,  
Unto the township of Phera they came and the house of Diocles,  
Offspring of Orsilochus, who was son of the River Alphéus;  
Here did they rest for the night, and as guests he entreated them kindly.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Straightway yoking the steeds, and the inlaid chariot mounting,  
Forth of the echoing portal they drave and the gate of the courtyard.  
Then did he whip to a start, and forward they willingly galloped,  
First to a plain wide-waving with wheat, then further and further  
Eager to finish their course pressed onward the fleet-paced horses,  
Till, as the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,



# ODYSSEY BOOK IV

**F**AIR Lacedaemon they reached, embosomed in cavernous mountains.  
Here to the mansion they drave of the far-famed prince Menelaus.  
Him in his palace they found in the midst of a throng of his kindred  
Holding a marriage feast for his peerless son and his daughter,  
Sending her forth to the son of Achilles, the router of cohorts,  
Whom long since in the land of the Trojans he promised the maiden,  
Vowing to give her; and heaven was now completing the marriage.  
Her was he sending with cars and with chariot-horses to journey  
Unto the city renown'd of the Myrmidons, where he was chieftain.  
Also a bride he was taking—Alector's daughter, of Sparta—  
Unto his son, the beloved and stalwart youth Megapenthes,  
Born of a slave—for to Helen an offspring never was granted  
After she once gave birth to a daughter of exquisite beauty,  
Hermione, who was fair as the Queen Aphrodite the golden.

Thus were holding a feast in the high-roofed halls of the palace  
Neighbours and all of the kin of the far-famed prince Menelaus,  
Making them merry; amidst them a godlike singer was singing  
Unto the sound of the harp; and aye as his song was beginning  
Went two tumblers whirling around in the midst of the feasters.

Meanwhile reaching the gate of the palace the twain with their horses,  
Nestor's glorious son and Telemachus the heroic,  
Halted, and here came forth and beheld them the lord Eteoneus,  
Ever-alert attendant of far-famed King Menelaus;  
Hurrying back to the house to report to the prince of the people,  
Close to his side he approached, and swift-winged words he addrest him:  
“Guests be arrived, unknown—O Zeus-loved King Menelaus!—  
Two be the men, and like to the offspring of Zeus the Almighty.  
Say, shall we loose from the yokes for the men their fleet-paced horses,  
Or shall we send them away where others shall give them reception?”  
Sorely displeased gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:  
“Ne'er did I deem thee a fool, Boëthous' son, Eteoneus,  
—Never till now; but behold, it is childish folly thou pratest.  
Verily both of us often as guests at the table of others  
Ate of their bread ere safely we landed—if truly in safety  
Zeus will protect us from evils to come. Go, loosen the horses;  
Then to the hall lead forward the strangers to share in the banquet.”

*Odysseu* Thus did he speak, and the man from the hall went busily hasting,  
Calling on other alert attendants and bidding them follow.  
These then, loosing from under the yoke all sweating the horses,  
Carefully fastened them both in the stall, each one at a manger,  
Poured out spelt in the manger and mixed it with glittering barley,  
Tilted the chariot up to the smooth white wall of the courtyard,  
Then with the strangers returned to the wonderful house; and with marvel  
Gazing around them they entered the home of the Zeus-loved monarch.  
For, as the sheen of the sun or the moon, there floated a glory  
Over the high-roofed palace of far-famed King Menelaus.  
Then, when at last they had sated their eyes with the pleasure of gazing,  
Straightway into a bath well polished they entered and bathed them.  
Now when the women had washed them and rubbed them with oil of the olive,  
Round them they cast soft mantles of wool and doublets and led them  
Into the hall; and they seated them nigh Menelaus Atrides.  
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer  
Beautiful, golden; and over a basin of silver she poured it,  
Bidding them wash, and she stationed a polished table beside them.  
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread and lay it before them,  
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.  
Carrying platters aloft came also a carver and offered  
Dishes of various meats; and gold-wrought goblets he gave them.  
Then to the strangers a greeting addressed fair-haired Menelaus:  
"Now partake of the food, and be welcome heartily! Later,  
After the supper is done, we shall ask your names and inform us  
Whence your descent—for in neither is perished the blood of the parent;  
Both are surely the children of chieftains nurtured by heaven,  
Bearers of sceptres. By churls were suchlike never begotten."  
These words spoken he took rich meat and placed it beside them,  
Roast of the chine of an ox that was served for himself as an honour.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them.

Now when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Telemachus then turned him to Nestor's son and addressed him,  
Holding his head right close, to be noticed of none of the others:  
"Nestor's son, dear friend, the delight of my heart, I beseech thee,  
Mark but the flashing of bronze in the echoing halls of the palace,  
Ay and of ivory too, and of amber, of gold and of silver.  
Such, I believe, inside is the mansion of Zeus on Olympus!  
Riches unending! Amazement possesseth me while I behold it."  
Thus as he spake it was noted of fair-haired prince Menelaus;

Wherefore lifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed them :

“ Nay, dear children, with Zeus to compete none dareth of mortals ;  
Lasting for ever and ever remain his mansion and riches.

Whether a mortal exists that can rival my treasures I know not ;  
Possible were it ; but far did I wander and sorely I suffered  
Bringing them home in my ships, and the eighth year saw my arrival.

Even to Cyprus I came and to Phoenicé and to Egypt ;  
Aethiop tribes I beheld, and Erembian ; visited Sidon,  
Libya too, where lambs from their birth bear horns on the forehead ;  
Here do the flocks thrice yeave in the year's complete revolution ;  
Never is lacking abundance to any—to lord or to shepherd—  
Either of sweet white milk, or of flesh for the table, or cheeses ;  
Such an unfailing supply is afforded by flocks to the milker.

While that in these far lands I was journeying, gathering riches,  
Wandering widely, another had meantime murdered my brother,  
Caught unawares by the craft of his wife—that woman accursed :  
Thus do I feel no joy in the wealth whereof I am master.

Ah but, I trow, these things ye have heard your fathers recounting,  
Whosoever they be, for immense was the woe that I suffered,  
Even the loss of a home right happy and wealth in abundance.

Would that I dwelt in a homestead with only a part of my riches,  
Yea with a third, and that still were living the heroes who perished  
There on the plain of the Troad afar from the pastures of Argos.

Still, though all of the men I bewail and am ever lamenting,  
Ofttimes thinking thereon as I sit in the halls of my palace,  
Bidding my soul for awhile to delight in her sorrow, and sometimes

Bidding her cease (since soon one wearies of chill lamentation),  
None of them all howbeit I mourn, though sorely I miss them,  
So as I grieve for the one—whose memory brings me abhorrence

Even of food and of sleep ; for of all of the sons of Achaea  
None could dare and endure as Odysseus ; but destiny gave him  
Many a woe, and to me this inconsolable sorrow,

Sorrow for one that is vanished away long years, and we know not  
Whether he lives or is dead ; and I ween that at home they bewail him,  
Aged Laertes his sire, and the true-souled Penelopeia,

Yea and Telemachus, whom he left as a babe in his homestead.”

Thus did he speak, and a longing to wail in the youth was awakened,  
While at the name of his sire from his eye there trickled a teardrop.

Hastily then uplifting his mantle of purple, he held it  
Close to his face with his hands ; which marking the prince Menelaus  
Doubtfully mused for a while in the depths of his mind and his spirit,

*Odyssey*

II

11-117

*Odyssey* Whether to leave him alone and allow him to mention his father,  
Or to begin forthwith and with questions straitly to test him.

11 136-137

Thus as he mused and revolved such things in his mind and his spirit,  
Out of the fragrant recess of a high-roofed chamber appearing  
Helen approached—like Artemis, goddess of glittering arrows.  
Set was her well-wrought chair by her maiden attendant Adrasté,  
While by Alcippe a wrapper was carried of delicate sheep-wool;  
Phylo carried a basket of silver, a present to Helen  
Given by Polybus' wife, Alcandré, dwelling in Thebae,  
City of Égypt, the houses whereof hold many a treasure.  
Polybus gave to the prince two bathing-vessels of silver,  
Two great tripods as well, and of gold ten talents he gave him.  
Also his consort bestowed right beautiful presents on Helen,  
Even a distaff of gold, and a fine-wrought basket of silver  
Standing on wheels; but in gold were finished the rims of the basket.  
This was the one now placed at her side by the maiden attendant  
Laden with yarn well-dressed for the spinning, and o'er it the distaff  
Lay outstretched with its wool dark-dyed of a violet colour.  
So she reclined on the chair; and below for her feet was a footstool.  
Straightway then to her husband she spake and questioned him closely:  
“Know we at all these men, Zeus-foster'd king Menelaus?  
What is the race they avow, these strangers that visit thy palace?  
Should I dissemble, or speak what is true? I am minded to speak it.  
Never before, I affirm, did I see such likeness in mortal,  
Whether in woman or man (it amazeth me while I behold it),  
Such as the youth here bears to the son of the noble Odysseus,  
Telemachus, who was left as a newborn child in the homestead,  
While that his father and ye the Achaeans for sake of a wanton,  
Even myself, came boldly assailing the town of the Trojans.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words fair-haired Menelaus:  
“Verily now I perceive, O Lady, the likeness thou notest.  
Such were truly the hands and the feet of the hero Odysseus;  
Such was the glance of his eyes, and also his hair and his forehead.  
Ay and behold, just now, as I spake concerning Odysseus,  
Calling to mind how sorely he toiled and suffered affliction  
All for my sake, from the eyes of the youth there trickled a teardrop;  
Hastily then to his face he uplifted his mantle of purple.”  
Him then addressing did Nestor's son Peisistratus answer:  
“Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,  
Verily this is indeed, as thou sayest, the son of Odysseus;



Lowly however he beareth his spirit and holds it unseemly  
Now on his early arrival to utter presumptuous language  
Here in the presence of one whose voice as a god's doth enchant us.  
Touching myself, I was sent by the knight Gerenian Nestor  
Him to attend on his journey as guide—for he longed to behold thee,  
Hoping to hear thee suggest some counsel for word or for action.  
Many a trouble and grief, when a father is gone from the homestead,  
Falls on a son, if he lacketh another to help and defend him.  
Telemachus has it thus—for his father is vanished, and no one,  
None in the land of his birth, can he find to protect him from ruin."  
Him then in answer addressed these words fair-haired Menelaus :  
"Verily now 'tis the son of a friend that is come to my palace,  
One that hath borne for the sake of myself full many a trial!  
Great was my longing to welcome him home as I welcomed no other,  
None of the Argives, had Zeus the Olympian, god of the thunder,  
Granted us both to return with the swift ships over the ocean.  
Then had I found him a city in Argos and made him a homestead,  
Bidding him come with his goods and his child from the Ithacan island,  
Ay and with all of his people—A town I had emptied of dwellers,  
One of the towns in the region anigh, of the which I am chieftain.  
Here had we oft foregathered in friendship, and nothing had ever  
Parted us, each one loving and happy in love of the other,  
Till at the last with its shadow the darkness of death overwhelmed us.  
All howbeit was fated, I ween, and the envy of heaven  
Cut from the one poor mortal the hope of return to his homeland."

Thus did he speak, and a longing to wail in them all he awakened :  
Weeping was Argive Helen, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty ;  
Weeping was Telemachus, and prince Menelaus Atrides ;  
Neither did Nestor's son keep tearless eyes as he listened,  
Deep in his spirit recalling the thought of the hero unrivalled  
Antilochus, who was slain by the glorious son of the Morning.  
Thinking thereon, to the monarch with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
"Atreus' son, of thy wisdom, surpassing the wisdom of mortals,  
Ancient Nestor was wont to recount us, if e'er in his palace  
Mention was made of thy name and we plied each other with questions.  
Now too follow my counsel, if possible—since, as I hold it,  
Wailing amidst of a banquet is far from a pleasure, and daylight  
Soon will be dawning. I blame not indeed nor resent as unseemly  
Weeping for one who is dead—whose destined doom is accomplished.  
This is the one last due we can offer to pitiful mortals,

*Alcibiades* Even the casting of hair and the falling from cheeks of the tear-drop,  
 I live in mourning for the lost—for a brother that died—of the Argives;  
*Antichloos* None of the wage, and methinks thou'rt like to have known him; for my part  
 Ne'er did I meet or behold him; but even if all was the foremost  
 Antichloos, it is said, unequalled in speed and in fighting.  
 Him then it turn gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaos,  
 "Friend, thus speak it as a man endowed with the spirit of wisdom:  
 Well might I speak and perform—you, even a man that is older,  
 Seeing that such is thy father, to speak thus wisely becomes thee.  
 Easily known is the child of a man whom Father Cronion  
 Destines to bless on the day of his birth and the day of his marriage.  
 Such is the fortune that all of his life he hath granted in Nestor.  
 Yea and allots him a smooth old age in the halls of his homestead,  
 Blessed in some war and all unequalled in appearance.  
 Now let us, putting away this sadness that lately befell us,  
 Mind magnanimity of the feast. Let a page bring water and pour it  
 Over the hands. In the morn we shall find full many a story,  
 Telemachos and myself, to recount each one to the other."  
 Thus did he speak and Nymphion on the hands poured water,  
 Every alert attendant of far-famed prince Menelaos.  
 Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them.

Meantime Helen the daughter of Zeus planned other devices,  
 Cutting a drug in the wine from the which were drinking the leasters.  
 Soother of pain is the drug, and of wrath, and of every sorrow;  
 Whoso'er should swallow a draught thus mixed in a wine-bowl,  
 Not for the space of a day on his cheeks would wrinkle & tear-drop,  
 Not if his father himself should die or the mother that bore him.  
 Nay nor even if his brother be slain, or the son that he loveth  
 Fall by the edge of the sword, and he see them dying before him.  
 Many a richlike drug, both potent and kindly, did Helen  
 Gain from the consort of These, Polydamas, a woman of Egypt.  
 Here both the fertile and loved parent plants in abundance,  
 Many benign, thus mixed in a potion, and many malignant.  
 Every dweller in Egypt moreover verily with a healer  
 Others of mortals; for truly the folk is the race of Pluton.

So when the poison was mingled she bade bear forth to the drinkers.  
 Then once more broke silence, addressing her husband in answer:  
 "Zeus loved king Menelaos Menes, and all of you present,  
 Sons of illustrious sires . . . (It is God who so this or so that man

Giveth of good or of evil. To him are possible all things),  
Seated remain, I beseech, in the hall, and renewing the banquet  
Take ye enjoyment in tales—I will tell one suiting the season.  
All of the stories I ne'er can relate, nor e'en can I name them,  
All the adventurous feats of the dauntless-hearted Odysseus;  
One will I tell that was dared and was done by the valiant hero  
While in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction.  
Unto disfiguring stripes of the lash he subjected his body;  
Then with his shoulders enveloped in pitiful wraps, as a bondman,  
Into the wide-way'd town of the foe he audaciously entered.  
Here he assumed the disguise of an utterly different person,  
Even a beggar—a part scarce his at the camp of the Grecians.  
Thus in the town of the Trojans he entered; nor felt a suspicion  
Any but I—for beneath the disguise of the beggar I knew him;  
Ay and I questioned him too; but he met me with crafty evasions.  
Lastly, whenas he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
Raiment I gave him to don and the solemn assurance I made him  
Not to betray him amidst of the Trojan folk as Odysseus,  
Till to the huts of the camp he had come and the swift-winged vessels.  
Then did he clearly inform me of all the designs of the Grecians.  
Thus he escaped, and many a Trojan he slew with the broadsword  
Ere to the Greeks he was come; and he carried them plentiful tidings.  
Then did the women of Troy raise shrill lamentation; but my heart  
Joy'd, for already my spirit was changed, and again I was yearning  
Back to my home, and repented the madness that queen Aphrodite  
Sent me when thither, afar from my well-loved country, she led me,  
Making me part from my child and my marriage-bed and a husband  
Lacking in nought—nor gifts of the mind nor beauty of person."

Her then in turn gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:  
"Verily, lady, thou tellest thy tale in an excellent manner.  
Many a hero I knew, and his inmost thoughts and his counsels  
Carefully marked, and in many a far-off land did I travel,  
Yet did I never behold with my eyes such daring in mortal  
Like to the inborn courage of dauntless-hearted Odysseus.  
Hear this too that was dared and was done by the valiant hero,  
While in the wood-built horse were sitting the chiefs of the Argives.  
All of us, plotting to bring on the enemy death and destruction,  
Thither anon thou camest. (A deity surely impelled thee,  
One that was wishing to grant to the Trojans glory and honour.)  
Godlike Deïphobus came also giving thee escort.

*Odyssey* 11  
11-115  
Testing by touch of the fingers the hollow ambush, thou passedst  
Thrice all round it, and calling by name on the chiefs of the Argives  
Madest thy voice to resemble the voice of a woman of Argos.  
Meanwhile Tydeus' son and myself and the godlike Odysseus  
Sat in the midst and listened intent to thy voice as it called us.  
Both of us others indeed kept longing to rise and to rush forth  
Out of the ambush, or else from within to respond to thy calling;  
Only Odysseus opposed our eager excitement and stay'd us.  
Then, all silent remaining the rest of the sons of Achaea,  
Anticlus was alone still wishing to give thee an answer,  
Ay and he opened his mouth; but Odysseus was sudden and closed it  
Firmly with powerful hands, thus saving the lives of the Grecians,  
Holding him fast till away thou wast summoned by Pallas Athene."  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,  
Still more grievous it seems that to hinder his pitiful ending  
Nought did avail, though truly within him his heart was of iron.  
Now will I beg thee to show us to bed; 'tis the season already  
Gladly to lay us to rest and with slumber sweet to delight us."

Thus did he speak, and Argive Helen commanded her maidens  
Under the porch two beds to arrange, and beautiful blankets,  
Purple, upon them to cast, and over them coverlets spreading,  
Mantles of wool moreover to lay enwrapping them warmly.  
So from the hall went quickly the handmaids carrying torches.  
Then, when the beds were strown, with a henchman to guide them the strangers,  
Nestor's glorious son and Telemachus the heroic,  
Came forth unto the porch in the front of the palace and slept there.  
Atreus' son too slept in the innermost room of the mansion,  
Long-robed Helen reposing anigh, most lovely of women.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Then from his bed uprose Menelaus good at the war-cry,  
Donned his apparel and hung him his keen-edged sword from his shoulder;  
Under his smooth-skinned feet then tying his beautiful sandals  
Out of his chamber he came as a god immortal in presence;  
Near to Odysseus' son then seating himself he addressed him:  
"Hero Telemachus, come say what reason hath brought thee  
Hither to fair Lacedaemon across wide wastes of the ocean,  
Whether a public affair or a private? Tell me exactly!"  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:

“Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,  
Hither for news I am come—hast thou aught to relate—of my father.  
Wasted away and devoured is the wealth of my lands and my homestead ;  
Filled is my palace with foes, who for ever infest it, and slaughter  
Sheep of my thick-thronged folds and my shambling, crook-horned cattle ;  
Suitors these of my mother, exceedingly insolent mortals.  
Wherefore now to thy knees am I come, if perchance thou art able  
News of his pitiful death to impart. Peradventure thou sawst it  
Even with thine own eyes, or hast heard some tale from another,  
One who had wandered—for born to a pitiful fate was Odysseus.  
Nor do thou shrink to offend, nor speak soft words in compassion.  
Tell me exactly the truth—how far thou hast chanced to behold him.  
Lo, I entreat thee :—if ever my father, the noble Odysseus,  
Either by word or by deed accomplished the thing that he promised  
Where in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction,  
This, I beseech thee, remember, and tell me the whole as it happened.”

Sorely displeased gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus :  
“Nay, by the gods! in the bed of a man right valiant-hearted  
These have chosen a couch for themselves—poor cowardly creatures!  
E’en as it haps when a hind in the lair of a powerful lion  
Maketh a bed for her fawns, new-litter’d and delicate sucklings,  
Fares then forth to the slopes and the grassy ravines of the mountains  
Seeking for pasture—and lo, to his covert returning the lion  
Suddenly maketh of both of the yearlings a terrible ending;  
Thus shall a terrible ending be made of the men by Odysseus.  
Would that, by Father Zeus and Athena and Phoebus Apollo,  
Such as he proved when of yore in the flourishing island of Lesbos  
Fearless he met with the huge Philomeleides in a contest,  
Wrestled and heavily threw him, and all the Achaeans exulted ;  
Would that he came—e’en such an Odysseus—to visit the suitors,  
Bringing to all of them speedy perdition and nuptials of anguish!  
Now for the matter whereof thou dost ask and entreat me, I promise  
Nought will I wrest from the truth, nor evasively speak and deceive thee ;  
All that the ancient god of the sea—that prophet unerring—  
Told me, of this will I nought keep back nor attempt to conceal it.

Once, as in Egypt I yearned to return to my home, the immortals  
Hindered me still, for I failed to perform sufficing oblations  
(Yea and the deities will it that mortals shall keep their commandments).  
Now by the mouth of Aegyptus, amidst deep surges of ocean,

*Odyssey* Riseth an isle—and the name that they give to the island is Pharos—  
*IV* Distant so far from the coast that a hollow vessel can reach it  
*346 - 395* Sailing the whole of a day when the wind blows shrilly behind her.  
 Here is a haven secure, whence many a well-built vessel  
 Puts forth into the ocean, with dark sweet water replenished.  
 Days full twenty herein by the gods I was holden, nor ever  
 Rose with a favouring breath such breeze of the sea as attendeth  
 Vessels, to waft them along o'er wide expanses of ocean.  
 Now had the food been wholly consumed, and the strength of my comrades,  
 Save for the help of a goddess who felt compassion and saved me,  
 Daughter of Proteus, ancient and powerful god of the ocean,  
 Eidotheë, whose heart I had strongly aroused to affection.  
 While I was roaming alone and afar from the others she met me.  
 These all over the coast of the isle were wandering widely  
 Fishing with well-bent hooks, since famine gnawed at their belly.  
 Near to my side she approached and uplifted her voice and addressed me :  
 ' Utterly childish thou seemst, O stranger, and indolent-witted.  
 Or is it choice that hath made thee remiss? Does suffering please thee?  
 Lo, it is long in this isle thou art holden, nor seemst to be able  
 Any escape to devise ; and thy comrades' spirit is failing.'  
 Thus did she speak ; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed her :  
 ' Whichsoever thou be'st of the goddesses, all will I tell thee.  
 Nowise willingly here am I held, but have surely by sinning  
 Angered immortals who dwell in the wide expanses of heaven.  
 Therefore tell me, I pray—since gods have knowledge of all things—  
 Which of the deities fetters me thus, and has hindered my going?  
 Tell me the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse !'  
 Thus did I speak ; forthwith responded the beautiful goddess :  
 ' Yea, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and clearly explain it.  
 Oft doth an ancient god of the ocean—the prophet unerring—  
 Proteus, hither resort—an Egyptian immortal, who knoweth  
 Every deep of the seas, and as herdsman serveth Poseidon.  
 Him do the voices of all as the father proclaim who begat me.  
 Lo now, shouldst thou be able by laying an ambush to catch him,  
 All he will surely reveal thee—the course and the bounds of thy journey—  
 Tell thee the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse ;  
 Ay and if so thou shalt wish, Zeus-fostered prince, he will tell thee  
 All that has happened of good and of ill in the halls of thy homestead  
 During the years thou hast fared on a journey so long and so grievous.'  
 Thus did she speak ; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed her :  
 ' Plan me an ambush thyself for the old sea-god, to ensnare him,



Lest too soon he shall see me and, ware of my purpose, escape me.  
Truly to master a god is a difficult task for a mortal.'  
So did I speak; forthwith responded the beautiful goddess:  
'Yea, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and plainly declare it:  
Oft as the sun upmounting attaineth the middle of heaven,  
Out of the brine creeps forth that ancient oracular sea-god.  
Hidden beneath black ripples he comes when the Zephyr is blowing,  
Crawls from the water, and lays him to sleep in the shade of a cavern.  
Round him the brood fin-footed of seals of the fair Halosydne  
Issuing forth from the grey salt sea lie huddled together  
Sleeping, and rank is the smell they emit of the deep salt water.  
Unto the spot will I guide thee as soon as the morn is appearing;  
There will I hide thee and station thy comrades. Be careful to choose thee  
Three of the bravest of all of thy men in the well-decked vessels.  
Now of the magical wiles of that ancient god I will tell thee:  
First he will number his seals and will go on his round to inspect them;  
After the counting is over and every seal is inspected,  
Down in the midst, as a shepherd amidst of his flock, he will lay him.  
Now so soon as ye see him at last well settled for slumber,  
Then is the moment at hand that ye look to your strength and your courage:  
Hold to him fast, however he longs and attempts to escape you!  
This he will try by assuming the form of whatever of creatures  
Creeps on the earth, and of water, and fire that fiercely consumeth.  
Yet shall ye ever the more persistently hold him and grip him,  
Till at the last he shall speak and himself shall address thee a question,  
Bearing the shape once more in the which he was seen as he slumbered;  
Then shalt thou loosen thy hold from the ancient god and release him;  
Question him too, O prince, which deity beareth thee malice;  
Ask him the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse.'

These words uttered, she plunged in the flood of the billowing ocean.  
Then to the vessels, that lay high-beached on the sands of the sea-shore,  
Straight I returned, and my heart as I went grew dark with forebodings.  
After at last I had come to the sea and arrived at my vessels,  
After the supper was done and ambrosial night was descending,  
Then did we lay us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Straight I betook me along by the beach of the wide-wayed waters  
Uttering many a prayer to the gods. Of the band of my shipmates  
Three I had brought, whom chiefly I trusted for any adventure.  
Meanwhile plunging below in the broad-spread gulf of the ocean



*Odyssey* Out of the watery depths four sea-calves' skins she had carried,  
All of them flayed quite fresh—a device for ensnaring her father.  
Then, so soon in the sand she had scooped out hollows for hiding,  
Sitting she waited until we arrived at the spot and approached her.  
So in the lairs she arranged us and covered us each with a seal's skin.  
Terrible now had it been—this lying in ambush ; for sorely  
Tried us the deadly malodorous stench of the brine-bred sea-calves ;  
(Where is the man would care to be couched with a monster of ocean ?)  
This howbeit she spared us, devising what greatly relieved us :  
Bringing ambrosia, under the nostrils of each she applied it,  
Breathing a scent so sweet that it conquered the stench of the sea-beasts.  
Thus then all of the morning we waited with hearts of endurance,  
Till at the last from the brine came flocking the seals, and they laid them  
One by another in ranks on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
High was the noon when the old god crawled from the water, and straightway,  
Finding his fat-fed flock, went round it and counted the number,  
Counting us too in the number of seals, nor felt a suspicion,  
Noticing nought of the snare ; and he laid him to slumber amidst them.  
Suddenly then with a shout did we cast us upon him and hold him  
Fast with the hands ; and the old sea-god forgot not his cunning.  
Firstly, behold, to the form of a long-maned lion he changed him,  
Then to a serpent, and then an enormous boar, and a leopard ;  
Melted to water, and then as a tree shot towering upward.  
Natheless still we persistently held him with hearts of endurance,  
Till at the last, grown weary of trying his magic devices,  
Thus did he speak—that old sea-god—and addressed me a question :  
' Say now, which of immortals hath given thee counsel, Atrides,  
Thus to enforce me by laying an ambush ? For what dost thou want me ? '  
So did he speak ; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed him :  
' Nay, thou knowest it ! Why dost thou prate, old man, to mislead me ?  
Lo, it is long in this isle I am holden, nor yet am I able  
Any escape to devise, and the heart in my bosom is failing.  
Therefore tell me, I pray (since gods have knowledge of all things),  
Which of the deities fetters me thus and has hindered my going ?  
Tell me the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse.'  
So did I speak ; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me :  
' Ay, but thou shouldst have offered to Zeus and to other immortals,  
Ere embarking, a goodly oblation and prayed them to bring thee  
Over the wine-dark sea with the utmost speed to thy country,  
Since thou art fated thy friends no more to revisit, and never  
Win to thy well-built home and arrive at the land of thy fathers,



THE STRUGGLE WITH PROTEUS



Ere once more to the flood of the heav'n-sprung river of Egypt  
Making return thou shalt offer again some splendid atonement  
Unto immortals who dwell in the wide expanses of heaven.  
Then shall the deities grant thee the path that thy soul desireth.'  
Thus did he speak and my spirit was utterly broken within me,  
Since he had bid me retrace my path on the mist-bound ocean  
Back to the river Aegyptus, so long and grievous a journey.  
Yet e'en thus did I find me the words to address him in answer:  
'Well then, all will I duly perform, old man, as thou biddest.  
Tell me however a thing that I ask thee, and clearly explain it:  
Whether the whole of the Greeks came home unscathed in their vessels,  
All who remained when with Nestor I sailed from the land of the Trojans.  
Know'st thou of any that met an inglorious death on the ocean,  
Or at the hands of his kindred, when wound to the end was the warfare?'

So did I speak; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me:  
'Atreus' son, what maketh thee ask? 'Twere verily better  
Nothing to know, nor to learn of my thoughts. Not long, I assure thee,  
Tearless wouldst thou remain, if with all these sorrows acquainted.  
Many a man of the Grecians is fallen and many surviving.  
Two of the leaders alone of the bronzen-coated Achaeans  
Perished returning (thyselt wert present during the warfare).  
One, still living, I ween, on the wide-spread ocean is holden.  
Ajax met with his death in the midst of his long-oared vessels.  
First by Poseidaon he was favoured, and coming to Gyrae  
Under enormous cliffs found refuge safe from the ocean,  
Yea and had surely escaped, though hated by Pallas Athene,  
Had he not uttered a vaunt in his pride and infatuate madness,  
Saying in spite of the gods he had traversed the gulf of the waters.  
Him did Poseidon hear as he uttered the arrogant boasting.  
Straight with his powerful hands did the sea-god seizing his trident  
Smite on the rock Gyraean a blow which cleft it asunder.  
Part of it held, but the part that was broken was flung in the ocean,  
Even the portion whereon he had climbed and had sat in his madness.  
So to the infinite depths of the billowing ocean it bore him.  
There did he die, down-swallowing floods of the salt sea water.  
Touching thy brother, escaping the dangers of ocean he safely  
Crossed in his hollow ships, by the favour of Hera protected.  
Ay and he nearly as far as Malea's precipitous headland  
Now was arrived, when a tempest of wind down-sweeping upon him  
Carried him, heavily groaning, away to the home of the fishes,

Chilpene  
48  
117-118

*Odyssey* Unto a distant bound of the land, once home of Thyestes,  
Later the dwelling-place of Aegisthus, the son of Thyestes.  
*11* Hence too dawned for thy brother a hope of returning in safety.  
*12* Veered by the gods was the wind to a breeze which wafted him homeward.  
Then at the last did he step on the land of his birth, and exultant,  
Touching the earth of his own dear country he kissed it, and teardrops  
Many and hot did he shed in his joy at beholding his homeland.  
Him from a sentinel crag did the watcher descry, who was stationed  
There by the crafty Aegisthus and promised reward for his watching,  
E'en two talents of gold; and the whole of a year he had watched there,  
Lest that the king should pass and make him remember his prowess.  
Straight did he haste with the news to the house of the prince of the people.  
Here forthwith was a plot right cunning devised by Aegisthus:  
Choosing him twenty—the best of the fighters—he set them in ambush,  
While at the opposite end of the hall he commanded a banquet.  
Then did he go to invite Agamemnon the prince of the people;  
Even with cars and with horses he met him—but brooded on murder;  
Welcomed him home, all unsuspecting of treason—and killed him—  
Feasted him—killed him—as one might slaughter an ox at the manger.  
Neither was left one man that had followed with King Agamemnon,  
Nor of Aegisthus' men: all died in the hall of the palace.

Thus did he speak, and my spirit was utterly broken within me.  
Bitterly weeping I sat on the sand, and the heart in my bosom  
Cared not for living on earth or longer beholding the sunlight.  
Then, when at last I was weary of weeping and writhing in anguish,  
Speaking again he addressed me, that ancient oracular sea-god:  
'Atreus' son, no longer, I pray, persist in this endless  
Weeping, wherein no gain we shall find. Nay, rather bethink thee  
How with the utmost speed to arrive at the land of thy fathers;  
So shalt thou seize him alive, unless he is killed by Orestes  
Ere thou arrivest and findest them holding his funeral banquet.'  
Thus as he spake, in my heart and my valiant spirit within me  
Once more comfort revived, though bitter indeed was my sorrow.  
Then did I open my lips and with swift-winged words I addressed him:  
'Now their fate do I know. Come, tell me the name of the third one,  
Even the one still held in the midst of the wide-spread ocean,  
Living or dead. Though bitter my grief, I am eager to hear it.'  
Thus did I speak; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me:  
'He that I mean is Odysseus the Ithacan, son of Laertes.  
Him I beheld on an island, and plentiful tears he was shedding,

Held in Calypso's halls ; for the sea-nymph still with compulsion  
 Keepeth him there all hopeless of reaching the land of his fathers,  
 Since no ship well-fitted with oars he possesseth or shipmates,  
 Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.  
 Touching thyself and thy fate, O Zeus-loved prince Menelaus,  
 Not with thy doom thou'lt meet midst horse-grazed meadows of Argos.  
 Thee to the ends of the earth and the plain Elysian later  
 Gods everlasting shall bring, where dwells fair-haired Rhadamanthys ;  
 Here is a life that of all is the lightest for earth-born mortals :  
 Here comes never the snow, nor a violent tempest and rain-storm ;  
 Here incessantly breatheth the breeze of the soft-voiced Zephyr  
 Sent by the ocean to bring to the land and its dwellers refreshment.  
 Yea, since Helen is thine, gods hail thee as son of the Highest.'

These words uttered, he plunged in the flood of the billowing ocean.  
 Then to the vessels, together with those my heroic companions,  
 Straight I returned, and my heart as I went grew dark with forebodings.  
 After at last we had come to the sea and arrived at the vessel,  
 After the supper was made and ambrosial night was descending,  
 Then did we lay us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
 Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
 Firstly of all down-dragging the ships to the vast salt water  
 On to the well-trimmed vessels we carried the sails and the mainmasts,  
 Then ourselves we embarked and seating us down on the benches  
 Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.  
 Back to the stream we returned of the heav'n-sprung river of Egypt ;  
 Here our vessels I moored and performed sufficing oblations.  
 So when appeased was the wrath of the gods everlasting, I straightway  
 Built Agamemnon a tomb, for his fame's undying remembrance ;  
 Which things duly fulfilled I departed, and favouring breezes,  
 Sent by the deities, sped me across to the home that I yearned for.  
 Now come, hearken I pray, and remain thou here in my palace  
 Till the eleventh is past and the twelfth day come to its dawning ;  
 Then will I speed thy departing and offer thee glorious presents,  
 Horses three and a car well polished ; and then I will give thee  
 Also a beautiful cup, that whenever thou makest libation  
 Unto the gods thou'lt think of thy friend so long as thou livest."  
 Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
 " Ah, Menelaus, attempt no longer, I beg, to detain me !  
 E'en for the space of a year 'twere easy to sit with contentment  
 Here at thy side, nor yearn to revisit my home and my parents,

*Hipposee.* Such is the wonderful pleasure with which to thy words and thy stories  
Ravished I list ; but already my mates are weary of waiting  
Over in beautiful Pylos—for long is the time thou hast kept me.  
Touching thy gift, give rather a present to keep as an heirloom !  
Horses to Ithaca ne'er will I take—far liefer I leave them  
Here, as the pride of thy stalls. Thou art lord of a plain and of pastures  
Widely extending and bearing abundance of lotus and spear-grass,  
Waving with wheat and with spelt and with broad-eared glistening barley.  
Ithaca holds not a mead, nor widespread courses for riding ;  
Pastures it offers for goats more lovely than pastures for horses,  
Suited for riding and pasturing horses is none of the islands  
Lying exposed to the ocean, and Ithaca less than the others.”  
Thus did he speak. With a smile Menelaus good at the war-cry  
Touched him caressing, and thus with a word of affection addressed him :  
“ Noble indeed is thy blood, dear child, since nobly thou speakest.  
Well, I will make an exchange in the gifts—I can readily do so.  
Out of the store of the treasures that lie in my palace as heirlooms  
One that is fairest of all, unrivalled in worth, will I give thee,  
Even a bowl for the mixing of wine, well-fashioned of silver,  
All of it solid ; but finished with gold is the lip of the vessel.  
This is a work of Hephaestus that hero Phaedimus gave me,  
King of the people of Sidon, who once in his palace received me,  
Thither returning, and now I am wishful on thee to bestow it.”

Thus long time did they hold such converse one with the other.  
Meantime banqueters flocked to the house of the godlike monarch  
Bringing the sheep for the feast, and wine which gladdens a mortal.  
Bread moreover was sent by the fair-tressed wives of the feasters.  
Then in the hall of the palace they busily furnished a banquet.

Meantime sported the suitors in front of the home of Odysseus,  
Taking delight in the hurling of spears and in casting the discus,  
Using a levelled ground that was often the scene of their uproars.  
Seated was Antinous, and anigh him was sitting the godlike  
Eurymachus. These two were bravest and best of the suitors.

Now came Phronius' son, and approached them, the famous Noëmon.  
Turning to Antinous he addressed him and asked him a question :  
“ Antinous, do we know in the least—doth none of us know it,—  
How soon Telemachus is returning from Pylos the sandy ?  
Off he is gone with a vessel of mine, and it happens I need her



Over to spacious Elis to cross, for a dozen of brood-mares  
There I possess. Hard-labouring mules I am rearing beneath them,  
Still unbroken, and one I will take from the mother and train it.”  
Thus did he speak, and they gazed with amazement, for ne’er had they deemed him  
Gone to Neleïan Pylos, but thought he was still in the country,  
Somewhere either afield with the flocks or perhaps with the swineherd.  
Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes’ son, and addressed him :  
“Tell me the truth ! Say, when did he go ? What followers took he ?  
Were they the pick of the Ithacan youths, or a crew of his own men,  
Servants and thralls of the farm ? He was capable even of this too.  
Also relate me the truth of the matter and give me assurance :  
Took he by force and in spite of thy wishes thy black-hulled vessel ?  
Or was it willingly lent him—thy ship—when he asked and entreated ?”  
Straightway Phronius’ son thus answered, the famous Noëmon :  
“Willingly lent was my ship. How could one possibly otherwise,  
Seeing a man like this, with a mind so full of vexations,  
Begging a loan ? ’Twas truly a difficult thing to refuse him.  
Also the noblest youths of the land—we only excepted—  
Join’d him as crew ; and Mentor I noticed embarking as captain,  
Mentor or else an immortal in all points like him exactly.  
One thing puzzles me still ; for the godlike Mentor I saw here  
Yester dawn—but the vessel had started already for Pylos.”  
These words uttered, he left them and went to the house of his father,  
While in the valiant spirits of both fierce anger was kindled.  
Unto the suitors they called to desist from the games and be seated.  
Then spoke Antinous, Eupheithes’ son, and addressed them :  
Wroth was the man, with a heart in the turbulent depths of his bosom  
Swelling with rage, and his two eyes blazing as flames of a furnace :  
“Heavens ! A fine thing now—and an impudent too—has accomplished  
Telemachus, with this voyage of his that we never believed in.  
Gone is the child, and in spite of us all ! He has simply defied us—  
Got them to launch him a ship, and has chosen the best of the rowers !  
Now still more of a plague he will prove. Zeus hurl to perdition  
Him and his fury before he shall hatch new troubles to vex us.  
Come now, give me a good swift vessel and twenty companions,  
So shall I lay me an ambush and watch his arrival, and catch him  
Just ’twixt Ithacan shores and the rock-bound island of Samos.  
Doleful enough he’ll find these sailings in search of a father !”  
Thus did he speak, and they all of them shouted approval and urged it.  
Then forthwith uprising they entered the house of Odysseus.

*Odyssey* II  
11-41 Neither for long thereafter from Penelopeia was hidden  
All that was said, and the plot so darkly devised by the suitors.  
Medon the herald informed her, who oft to the plottings had listened  
Standing outside of the court as they wove these counsels within it.  
Thorough the palace he hasted to tell it to Penelopeia,  
Till, as he stepped from the stone of the door she perceived and addressed him :  
“ Wherefore, herald, I pray, art thou sent by the arrogant suitors ?  
Cam’st thou to order the women attendants of godlike Odysseus  
Laying aside their tasks to prepare these masters a banquet ?  
Would that without more wooings, without more banquetings either,  
Now on the spot they’d sup their last and their latest supper !  
Ye that as wolves come trooping and wasting the wealth of the homestead,  
Riches of Telemachus wise-hearted, I ween that ye never  
Heard your fathers in days of the past—you being but children—  
Speak of Odysseus and how he was prized by the men that begat you,  
How that he never in word or in deed wrought any injustice  
Unto the people—the wont of a ruler appointed by heaven,  
While that he hateth the one of his subjects and favours another.  
No ! by Odysseus was none e’er treated with pride and presumption,  
Whilst for yourselves . . . what spirit is yours, what shameless behaviour,  
Plainly appears ; and to him that is kind ye are utterly thankless.”  
Then did the sage old Medon, the herald, address her in answer :  
“ Would, dear lady, that this were the worst of the evils that threaten !  
Greater by far is the crime, and fraught more fully with danger,  
Now by the suitors devised. God grant that they never fulfil it !  
Telemachus with the edge of the sword they are meaning to murder  
While he is voyaging homeward ; for, hoping to hear of his father,  
Lately he started for Pylos the fair and divine Lacedaemon.”

Thus did he speak, and with knees and with heart all quaking she stood there.  
Speechless long she remained, struck mute, while gathering teardrops  
Flooded her eyes, and the flow of her clear-voiced utterance failed her,  
Till at the last she recovered her speech and addressed him in answer :  
“ Wherefore, herald, I pray, is my son departed ? He nowise  
Needed to mount on a ship—on a swift-paced vessel that sailors  
Ride as a horse and traverse the watery waste of the ocean.  
Wills he that even his name no longer remain in remembrance ? ”  
Then did the sage old Medon, the herald, in answer address her :  
“ Whether a deity urged him I know not, or whether within him  
Moved was his spirit to journey to Pylos to gain him assurance  
Of or his father’s return or else of the fate he hath met with.”

These words uttered he turned and retraversed the house of Odysseus,  
While o'erwhelmed with her grief, heartbroken, and wholly unable  
Still on a chair to remain—of the many that stood in her homestead—  
Down by the threshold she sank on the floor of the well-built chamber,  
Uttering pitiful wails, and around her lamented her maidens,  
All of the women attendants, the young as the old, in the palace.  
These then addressing with many a groan spake Penelopeia :  
“Dear ones, listen—for sorrow hath Zeus the Olympian sent me  
Passing the sorrows of all of the friends and the mates of my childhood.  
Erstwhile lost I a husband—my lord with the heart of a lion—  
Foremost of all of the Grecians in every manly perfection,  
Him whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.  
Now is my dearly-belovéd, my son, swept hence by the storm-blasts,  
Vanished from hearing and home—nay, e'en of his going I heard not !  
Ah, hard-hearted ! for none of you, none, took thought to inform me,  
Waking me out of my slumbers, and none, though fully ye knew it,  
Said to me aught when he mounted aboard of the black-hulled vessel.  
Had I but known he was making him ready to fare on a journey,  
Verily either at home he had stay'd, though bent on departure,  
Else he had left me behind him dead in the halls of his homestead.  
Nay come, one of you haste and the good old Dolius summon,  
Even the slave I received, ere hither I came, from my father.  
Now to my garden of trees he attends. Go, see that he quickly  
Sit by the side of Laertes and tell him of all that has happened.  
He peradventure will weave a device in his mind, and in public  
Unto the people will proffer his plaint of the men who so fiercely  
Purpose his seed to destroy and the seed of the godlike Odysseus.”  
Her did the nurse give answer, the dear old Eurycleia :  
“Slay me, my mistress belov'd, with the pitiless blade, or in pity  
Leave me to live in thy halls—not a word will I hide of the matter.  
All of it, all, did I know ; I supplied him with all that he wanted,  
Even with bread and with sweet strong wine, and I solemnly promised  
Nothing to thee to reveal till the twelfth day came to its dawning  
(Didst thou not miss him before, and by questioning learn his departure)  
Lest thou perchance shouldst weep and thy fair face mar with thy weeping.  
Nay now, bathe thee with water and throw fresh raiment around thee,  
Then to thy upper apartment ascending with women attendants  
Pray to Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.  
She is a goddess that even from death will be able to save him.  
Trouble the old man not !—he hath trouble enough—and believe me,  
Ne'er is the race of Arceisius' son by the blesséd immortals

*Odysseus* Hated so wholly; an heir shall survive and shall hold in possession  
High-roof'd homes and the fruitful domains spread widely around them."

Thus did she still her lament and her pitiful tears; and her lady,  
After herself she had bathed and cast fresh raiment around her,  
Unto her upper apartment ascending with women attendants  
Placed in a basket the barley for sprinkling and prayed to Athene:  
"Daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis, thou maiden unwearied,  
Listen! If ever of yore in his homestead wileful Odysseus  
Burnt to thy honour the fat thigh pieces of sheep or of oxen,  
This I beseech thee remember, and rescue my son, my beloved!  
Ward far off the malicious designs of the insolent suitors!"

These prayers uttered, she wailed, and her vows were heard by the goddess,  
While from the shadowy hall came sounding the din of the suitors,  
All of the insolent youths thus shouting, the one to the other:  
"Lo now, truly at last our lady of many a wooer  
Thinketh of wedding—nor knows that the death of her son is determined."  
Thus spake one to the other, nor knew they of what was determined.  
Antinous then turned to his fellows, and thus he addressed them:  
"See to avoid, good sirs, all language loudly disdainful—  
All such boasting—that none to the palace within shall report it.  
Rather in silence, so far as ye can, let us rise and accomplish  
All we bespake, for the thing we decided was fully agreed on."  
Thus did he speak, and choosing him twenty, the best of the rowers,  
Forthwith went on his way to the ship and the strand of the ocean.  
Here did they first draw down to the deep sea water a vessel,  
Then, on the black-hulled vessel embarking the sails and the mast-tree,  
All of the oars to the tholes made fast with the lashings of leather,  
Each in its place, and the white sails hoisted aloft on the yardarm.  
Weapons also aboard were carried by haughty attendants.  
Now when at last she was moor'd high out in the harbour, embarking  
There on the vessel they supped and awaited the coming of even.

Still in her upper apartment remained wise Penelopeia.  
Fasting she lay on her couch, and heedless of thirst and of hunger  
Mused on her valiant son—was he yet to escape from destruction,  
Or was he doomed as the victim to fall of the arrogant suitors?  
E'en as a lion that wavers in doubt in the throng of the hunters,  
Fearing, as closer they draw the insidious circle around him,  
Thus did she waver in doubt till, a deep sleep falling up on her,  
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Backward softly she sank with her joints all loosened, and slumbered.

*Odyssey*

*II*

Other was now the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene.  
First she created a phantom. In form it was like to a woman,  
Iphthimé, who was daughter of Icarius great-hearted.  
(Her Eumelus had taken to wife, and her home was at Phrae.)  
Then did she send it to go to the palace of godlike Odysseus,  
Bidding it make the bewailing and sorrowing Penelopeia  
Cease from her groaning and shedding of tears and her sad lamentation.  
Into the room by the hole of the latch-string entered the phantom,  
Stood at the head of the queen, and thus it began to address her :  
“Sleep’st thou, Penelopeia, outwearied at heart with thy mourning?  
Ne’er can it hap that the gods, who live at their ease in the heaven,  
Wish thee to weep and to sorrow. Again to his home they will bring him,  
Even thy son—for in nought hath he vexed the immortals by sinning.”  
Then forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Though at the portal of dreams she already was slumbering softly :  
“Wherefore now art thou come, O sister? Never aforetime  
Here to resort was thy wont, since distant far is thy homestead.  
Yea and thou biddest me cease from my pain and forget my afflictions,  
All those many afflictions that torture my mind and my spirit !  
Erstwhile lost I a husband—my lord with the heart of a lion,  
Foremost of all of the Achaeans in every manly perfection,  
Him whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.  
Now is my well-loved son on a hollow vessel departed,  
Yet but a child, unskilled in the deeds of a man and in speaking.  
Him I lament more bitterly still than I mourned for his father,  
Yea I lament and I tremble in fear lest aught shall befall him  
Either among those people he visits, or else on the ocean,  
Seeing that many a foe plots evil devices against him,  
Longing to kill him or ever he win to the land of his fathers.”  
Then to the queen once more made answer the shadowy phantom :  
“Take thou courage, nor feel in thy heart such dread and despondence.  
She who attendeth and guards him is such that a mortal in peril  
Ever will pray her to stand at his side (for to aid she is able),  
Pallas Athena, the goddess who pities thee now in thy sorrow ;  
Yea it is she that hath bidden me come this message to bring thee.”  
Then to the phantom again spake wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Art thou divine, or hast listened to words by divinity spoken,  
Come, I beseech, and the fate of that other unfortunate tell me,  
Whether he still is alive on the earth and beholdeth the sunlight,

*Odyssey* Or—is he dead and already below in the mansion of Hades ?”

11 Then to the queen once more made answer the shadowy phantom:

501 + 502 “Touching the fate of thy lord I can say to thee nothing for certain  
Whether he lives or is dead ; and an evil is idle discussion.”

These words uttered it glided away by the bolt of the doorpost  
Into the air and the breezes of heaven ; and out of her slumbers  
Penelopeia awoke, and the heart in her bosom was lightened,  
Such was the clearness with which had approached her that vision of midnight.

Now had the suitors embarked and had voyaged the paths of the waters  
Plotting a violent death in their hearts for the son of Odysseus.  
Far from the land there riseth a crag in the midst of the waters,  
Just 'twixt Ithacan shores and the rock-bound island of Samos,  
Asteris ; tiny the inch, but within it a harbour for shipping  
Twy-mouthed ; here the Achaeans awaited him, lying in ambush.



# ODYSSEY BOOK V

**W**HILE that the Morn from the couch of her consort, lordly Tithonus,  
Newly arisen was bringing the daylight to men and immortals,  
Unto a session of council the deities gathered, and midst them  
Sat high thundering Zeus, whose might of them all is the greatest.  
Then did Athena begin of Odysseus, his many afflictions

Calling to mind, for it grieved her to think of him still with the sea-nymph :

“Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blessed,  
Never be kindly affectioned again, nor loving and gentle,  
Any that beareth the sceptre as king, nor righteously minded !  
Nay, let him rather be hard and be cruel and practise injustice !  
So is it true that the godlike Odysseus by none is remembered,  
None of the people he governed and lovingly ruled as a father.  
Now on an island he lieth, and cruel the pain that he suffers,  
Held in Calypso’s halls ; for the sea-nymph still with compulsion  
Keepeth him there all hopeless of reaching the land of his fathers,  
Since no ship well-fitted with oars he possesseth or shipmates,  
Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.  
Also his dearly-belovéd, his son, they are meaning to murder  
While he is voyaging homeward ; for hoping to hear of his father  
Lately he journeyed to Pylos the fair and divine Lacedaemon.”  
Her then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the storm-clouds :  
“Nay but my child, what word by the door of thy lips hath escaped thee ?  
Surely the plan was devised, and by none but thyself, that Odysseus  
Safely returned to his home should wreak his revenge on the suitors.  
Telemachus do thou guard with thy guidance (for well thou art able)  
So that without all harm he shall come to the land of his fathers,  
While all baffled the suitors return once more in the vessel.”

These words uttered, to Hermes, his well-loved son, he addressed him :  
“Hermes—for ever as herald thou bear’st the behests of immortals—  
Bring to the fair-tressed nymph our will’s immutable verdict,  
Even that patient Odysseus return and arrive at his homeland,  
Neither by furthering aid of the gods nor of men that be mortal—  
Nay, on a firm-lashed raft shall he sail and with sufferings many  
Days full twenty shall drift, till he come to the Scherian island,  
Land of a nation akin to the gods, Phaeacian people ;  
These in their hearts will revere him and honour him like an immortal,  
Yea and will send him again in a ship to his well-loved homeland,



*Odyssey* Giving him many a present of bronze and of gold and of raiment,  
Riches so great as he never had won from the land of the Trojans  
Had he returned unscathed and received full share of the booty.  
Thus is he fated his friends once more to revisit and once more  
Win to his high-roofed home and arrive at the land of his fathers.”

Thus when he spake, Hermeias the Messenger, Slayer of Argus,  
Quickly obeyed, and he bound to his ankles the beautiful sandals,  
Golden, immortal, that carry him over the waters of ocean  
Swift as the blast of a storm, and across earth's boundless expanses ;  
Took then his wand, with the which men's eyes he entranceth to slumber  
E'en as he wills, while others again from their sleep he awaketh.  
So with the rod in his hand the redoubtable Slayer of Argus  
Flew, till above the Piërian land from the sky to the ocean  
Plunging he sped mid the waves of the sea, as a cormorant speedeth  
Over the perilous gulfs of the barren expanses of ocean,  
Chasing the fishes and drenching in salt sea water its plumage.  
Thus Hermeias was borne mid the infinite throng of the billows,  
Till at the last he arrived at the shore of that far-off island.  
Here from the violet depths of the ocean emerging he mounted  
Into the island until he was come to a cavern capacious,  
Home of the fair-tressed nymph of the sea ; and he found her within it.  
High from a hearth shot upward a flame, and widely around it  
Odours of splintered cedar and juniper over the island  
Spread as it blazed ; and within with a beautiful voice she was singing,  
Moving in front of her loom, and with shuttle of gold she was weaving.  
Close to the cavern and clustered around it was growing a coppice ;  
Alder was there and poplar and cypress of delicate perfume.  
Many a long-winged bird in the copse found covert at night-time,  
Many a falcon and owl, and crook-billed chattering sea-crows,  
Birds of the brine which busy themselves with a life on the ocean.  
Here too, stretching in front of the hollow mouth of the cavern,  
Trailed a luxuriant vine rich-laden with many a cluster.  
Four bright runnels of water arose from a neighbouring fountain,  
Each one nigh to the other but turned to a different channel.  
Spreading around soft meadows with violets blossomed and parsley  
Richly bedight—yea e'en an immortal, if haply he came there,  
All might wondering view and rejoice in his heart to behold it.

Here stood gazing in wonder the Messenger, Slayer of Argus,  
Till at the last, when his spirit was fully contented with gazing,  
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Into the wide-mouthed cavern he entered ; and standing before her  
Straightway known was the god to the beautiful goddess Calypso,  
Seeing that never unknown is a deity unto another,  
None of the spirits immortal, not e'en if he dwells at a distance.  
Not inside of the cavern he found great-hearted Odysseus.  
Out on the beach he was sitting and weeping, as ever aforetime,  
Painfully racking his soul with his grieving and groaning and weeping,  
Gazing with tears in his eyes at the barren expanse of the ocean.  
Now with a question addressed him the beautiful goddess Calypso,  
After the god on a polished and glittering chair she had seated :  
" God of the golden wand, Hermeias, revered and beloved,  
Say now, why art thou come ? 'Thou camest rarely aforetime.  
Tell me the whole of thy thought. I am bid by my heart to fulfil it,  
What to fulfil I am able, if Fate shall permit the fulfilment.  
Now come, follow within ! I will give thee a welcome as guest-friend."  
These words uttered the goddess, and placing a table beside him  
Full of ambrosia, mixed him of rich red nectar a goblet.  
Soon was he drinking and eating, the Messenger, Slayer of Argus.  
Now when at length he had supped and contented his spirit with eating,  
Unto the goddess he turned and thus he addressed her in answer :  
"Thou who art goddess hast questioned a god on his coming, and therefore  
All that as message I bear will I truly relate, as thou biddest.  
Zeus hath commanded me hither to come, and I came—but unwilling.  
Who would willingly cross such spaces of salt sea water ?  
Terrible, endless ! and never at hand was a city of mortals  
Where to the gods oblation of choice fat victims is offered.  
Ah but the mind and the purpose of Zeus who beareth the aegis  
None can evade or annul, not even another immortal.  
Here in thy home is a man, he asserts, most wretched of all men,  
All of the others who fought at the siege of the city of Priam  
Nine long years—In the tenth, when the city was sacked, they departed  
Homeward ; but during the voyage they sinned and offended Athene ;  
Therefore roused she the wind and enormous billows against them.  
Then did the rest, yea all of his brave companions, perish ;  
Hither alone he was borne by the stress of the wind and the billows  
Him Zeus bids thee to send on his way—and as quickly as may be.  
Destiny willeth it not that he die here far from his dear ones,  
Since he is fated his friends once more to revisit and once more  
Win to his high-roofed home and arrive at the land of his fathers."

Thus did he speak and she shuddered, the beautiful goddess Calypso ;

*Odysseus* Then upraised she her voice and with swift-winged words she addressed him :

112 . 150 "Truly ye gods are cruel of heart and exceedingly jealous!  
Ever ye grudge that a goddess shall mate with a man that is mortal,  
Openly though it be done and she take him as consort and love him.  
Thus when Orion was chosen by Morning, the roseate-fingered,  
All of you gods were jealous, who live at your ease in the heaven,  
Till in Ortygia's isle chaste Artemis, golden-enthroned,  
Launching her painless shafts assailed him and suddenly slew him.  
Also with Iasion when the fair-tressed goddess Demeter,  
Yielding herself to desire, was united in tender embraces,  
While in a thrice-ploughed fallow they lay, right quickly perceived it  
Zeus; and he cast with the blinding bolt of his thunder and slew him.  
Now once more ye are jealous, ye gods, that I live with a mortal,  
Even the man that I saved as he clung to the keel of his vessel  
Sole—for the swift-winged ship with the blinding bolt of his thunder  
Zeus in the midst of the wine-dark ocean had smitten and shattered.  
Then did the rest, yea all of his brave companions, perish;  
Hither alone was he borne by the stress of the wind and the billows.  
Him did I tenderly cherish and nourish, and also I promised  
Even to make him immortal and ageless for ever and ever.  
Ah but the mind and the purpose of Zeus who beareth the aegis  
None can evade or annul, not even another immortal.  
So, let him go!—since such is the will and command of the Father—  
Over the wastes of the sea let him go! No aid can I give him,  
Since I possess no ships well fitted with oars and with rowers,  
Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.  
Yet will I readily prompt him thereto, nor will practise concealment,  
So that without all harm he shall come to the land of his fathers."  
Her then in turn gave answer the Messenger, Slayer of Argus:  
"Well now, speed his departing, and slight not the wrath of the Father,  
Lest peradventure hereafter in anger he send thee affliction."

These words uttered, departed the valiant Slayer of Argus.  
Then great-hearted Odysseus to seek did the lady Calypso  
Quickly betake her, as soon as she heard the behest of the Father.  
Him still sitting she found on the shore; incessant the teardrops  
Flooded his eyes, and ebbing away was his life and its sweetness,  
While for his homeland he pined, no longer in love with the sea-nymph.  
Truly at night he had ever (not finding a means of refusal)  
Slept by her side in the cave, unwilling indeed—but she willed it.  
All day long howbeit he sat on the rocks or the shingle

Painfully racking his soul with his grieving and groaning and weeping,  
Gazing with tears in his eyes at the barren expanse of the ocean.  
Coming anigh now spake and addressed him the beautiful goddess:  
"Ill-starred mortal, remain no longer with me on my island,  
Wailing and pining to death! I am ready to speed thy departure.  
Come now, fell with the axe tall timber and join it together  
Into a broad-beamed raft, and a bulwark fix thou upon it  
High, that in safety it carry thee over the mist-bound ocean.  
Then on the raft will I place wheat-bread, sweet water and red wine,  
Food that delighteth the heart of a man and appeaseth his hunger.  
Raiment to clothe thee withal will I give, and a breeze will I send thee,  
Such as shall bring thee in safety again to the land of thy fathers,  
Should the immortals be willing who dwell in the infinite heaven,  
Since they are stronger than I to devise what they will and perform it."  
Thus did she speak and he shuddered, the patient and godlike Odysseus;  
Then upraised he his voice and with swift-winged words he addressed her:  
"Other is here thy device, O goddess—not homeward to send me—  
While on a raft thou bidd'st me retrace a gulf of the ocean  
Such in its terrors and perils that never a well-built vessel  
Voyaging swiftly and gladdened by Zeus-sent breezes will cross it.  
Ne'er will I mount on a raft—still less if it give thee displeasure—  
Art thou not willing to swear me an oath and solemnly promise  
Never against me to plot a device that is evil to harm me."  
Thus did he speak, and smiling the beautiful goddess Calypso  
Touched him with gentle caress, then opened her lips and addressed him:  
"Truly thou seemest a rogue—not at all with the wits of a weakling—  
Craftily thus to devise in thy heart these words thou hast uttered.  
Well—be my witness the earth and the infinite heaven above us,  
Yea and the water of Styx which floweth beneath us—the greatest,  
Most terrific of oaths e'er sworn by the blessed immortals—  
Ne'er will I plot a device that is evil against thee to harm thee.  
Nay, what I think and intend to advise is exactly the counsel  
I to myself would give, were suchlike need to befall me.  
Also in me is a mind which loves what is fair and is seemly,  
Nor is the heart in my bosom of iron; it feelth compassion."

These words uttered, at once went forward the beautiful goddess,  
Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the sea-nymph.  
Soon they arrived, both goddess and man, in the shade of the cavern.  
Here did Odysseus recline on the chair from the which had arisen  
Hermes, and near him the nymph laid out all manner of viands,

(Odysseus) Many a meat and a drink—such food as is eaten by mortals.  
Then on a chair she reclined full fronting the godlike Odysseus,  
While that her maiden attendants ambrosia brought her and nectar.  
Now did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Once more made a beginning the beautiful goddess Calypso :  
“ Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wifeul Odysseus,  
Dost thou indeed so wish to the well-loved land of thy fathers  
Now forthwith to return? E'en so, good fortune attend thee !  
Yet, if thou knewst in thy heart what measure of woe and affliction  
Still it is fated for thee to fulfil ere reaching thy homeland,  
Here thou'ldst wish to remain, and to rule as the lord of my household,  
Yea and be made an immortal—how strong soever thy yearnings  
After thy consort—for whom thou art sighing for ever and alway.  
Ay and forsooth not less am I able to boast me of beauty  
Either of form or of favour—for surely it never beseemeth  
Earth-born women to vie with immortals in form and in feature.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Goddess and queen, O speak not in anger ! I know it myself too—  
Well do I know it that likened to thee wise Penelopeia  
Seems less comely in face and in form less noble to look on.  
She is an earth-born woman and thou art immortal and ageless.  
Still e'en so, it is true, I am longing and yearning for ever  
After my home, and I dream of the dawn of the day of returning.  
E'en if a god should shatter my raft on the wine-dark ocean,  
All will I bear, for the heart in my bosom disdaineth disaster.  
Much I have suffered already, and many a peril and hardship  
Seen on the sea and in war : let this to the number be added ! ”  
Thus did he speak, and the sun went down, and the darkness descended.  
Then did the twain to an inner recess of the cavern betake them.  
Here they delighted in love and abode right gladly together.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Forthwith donned his apparel Odysseus, his tunic and mantle,  
While that the nymph threw round her a garment of glistering whiteness,  
Delicate, lovely; and over her waist then fastened a girdle,  
Beautiful, fashioned of gold ; and her head in a hood she enveloped.  
Then she bethought her to send on his way great-hearted Odysseus.  
Firstly a great wood-axe, in his hands well fitted, she gave him,  
Fashioned of bronze, two-edged ; and firmly inserted within it  
Fixed was a helve of the wood of an olive, of wonderful beauty.



THE BUILDING OF THE RAFT





Also she gave him an adze well-sharpened, and going before him  
Led to an end of the isle where tall straight timber was growing ;  
Alder was there and poplar and pine which reacheth to heaven,  
Dry long since, well-seasoned and buoyant to float on the water.  
After the spot she had shown where tall straight timber was growing ;  
Homeward again she betook her, the beautiful goddess Calypso.

Then did he hew him his rafters, and quickly the work made headway.  
Twenty the trees that he felled, and he lopp'd all clean with the wood-axe,  
Planed them and cut all straight to the line with the skill of a master.  
Now meanwhile she had brought to him borers, the goddess Calypso,  
So that he bored each beam, and fitting the one to the other  
Hammered and joined all firmly together with clamps and with tree-nails.  
Even as much as a man who is versed in the craft of a shipwright,  
Making a broad-beamed hull, might measure him off for the bottom,  
Such for his broad-beamed raft was the platform made by Odysseus.  
Bulwarks too he erected and strengthened with many an upright,  
Coping them off from above in the whole of their length with a gunwale ;  
Made then a mast and shipped it, and hoisted and fitted the yardarm ;  
Fashioned moreover a rudder to guide its course in the waters ;  
Fenced it around from the stem to the stern with a wattle of osiers,  
Making it safe from the waves ; and he covered it over with boarding.  
Now meanwhile she had brought to him canvas, the goddess Calypso,  
Bidding him fashion the sails, and he wrought these skilfully also,  
Binding upon them the sheets ; and he rigged her with braces and halyards,  
Then with his handspikes hove her down to the vast salt ocean.  
Now was the fourth day come, and all of his labour was ended ;  
So on the fifth day sped his departing the goddess Calypso,  
Bathing him first and arraying him freshly in fragrant apparel.  
Then to the raft she conveyed dark wine in a bottle of goat-skin  
—One was of wine and another, a greater, of water—and viands  
Stowed in a wallet ; and many a toothsome relish she added.  
Then did she send him a favouring breeze both gentle and kindly.

Now exulting his sails to the breeze spread godlike Odysseus.  
Keeping the raft to her course by the helm with the skill of a sailor  
Seated he steered (nor a moment did drowsiness fall on his eyelids),  
Holding the Pleiads in view and the autumn-setting Boötes,  
Holding moreover the Bear, that is called by the name of the Wagon.  
(Ever she circles around and around on the watch for Orion,  
Having alone of the stars no share in the baths of the ocean.)

*Odyssey* Her—since thus had commanded the beautiful goddess Calypso—  
Voyaging over the ocean he steadily held on the left hand.  
*16-17* Seven and ten was the number of days that he voyaged the waters,  
Till on the eighteenth day he beheld far shadowy mountains,  
Where was arising the land Phaeacia nearest before him,  
Like to a vapoury rack, as it loomed on the mist-bound ocean.

Now from the Aethiop people returning, the King Earth-shaker  
Forth of the far-off hills of the Solymi looked, and beheld him  
Voyaging over the sea, and, enraged more fiercely than ever,  
Wagging his head in his wrath, spake thus to the spirit within him:  
“Lo now! Truly it seemeth the gods have altered their counsels  
Touching Odysseus, when I was away with the Aethiop people.  
Now he is nigh to the land Phaeacia, where he is fated  
Out of affliction’s net to escape, that was closing around him;  
Yet shall I force him, I promise, to suffer his fill of misfortune.”  
Thus as he spake he collected the clouds and stirred up the ocean,  
Both hands seizing the trident, and wakened to fury the tempests,  
Every wind of the heaven. All covered and darkened with storm-rack  
Earth was at once and the sea, while down from the sky fell midnight.  
Wildly together they rushed—East, South, and the furious West Wind,  
Air-born Boreas too, with a huge wave rolling before him.  
Then were loosened the limbs and the inmost heart of Odysseus,  
While distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:  
“Ah, poor wretch that I am! What fate in the end will befall me?  
Verily now do I fear that she spake too truly, the goddess,  
Saying that here on the sea, ere reaching the land of my fathers,  
Woes to the full I shall suffer. It surely is finding fulfilment.  
Lo, how mighty the rack wherewith envelops the welkin  
Zeus; and he stirreth the deep, and down come sweeping the storm-blasts.  
Every wind of the heaven. Now sheer destruction is certain.  
O thrice happy and four times they, those heroes who perished  
Once on the Trojan plain for the sake of the lordly Atridae!  
There, O, would I had died and my destined doom had encountered,  
Yea on the day when so many a bronze-shod spear of the Trojans  
Hurtled around me bestriding the body of fallen Achilles!  
So had I gained death-rites and th’ Achaeans had held me in honour.  
Now by a pitiful doom overwhelmed I am fated to perish.”

E’en as he spake from aloft came crashing a billow enormous  
Bursting terrific upon him and whirling the quivering raft round.  
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Far from the raft he was swept by the wave, and the rudder in falling  
Loosed from the grip of his hand, while clean in the middle the mast snapt,  
Smit by the terrible blast of the winds which met in a cyclone.  
Far off on to the waves down clattered the sail with the yardarm.  
Long did it keep him below in the depths of the water, unable  
Swiftly to rise, held back by the rush of the mountainous rollers,  
Weighed down too by his garment, the gift of the goddess Calypso.  
Slowly at last he arose, and the pungent brine of the billow  
Spat from his mouth, while down from his head in a flood it was streaming.  
Neither forgot he the raft e'en then, though sorely exhausted.  
Making a dash in the water he reached it and clutched it, and climbing  
Sat him amidships down, thus saved from the jaws of destruction,  
While on the great sea-rollers she tossed, swept hither and thither.  
Even as Boreas sweepeth in autumn the down of the thistles  
Over a plain, all closely entangled together in masses,  
So now over the sea winds carried her hither and thither.  
Now for a space she was left by the North as a sport for the South Wind,  
Now by the East for a time to the West the pursuit was abandoned.

Seeing his peril the daughter of Cadmus with beautiful ankles,  
Ino Leucothœe—erstwhile an articulate mortal,  
Now in the depths of the brine by the gods as a deity honoured—  
Pitied Odysseus, as thus he was tossed by the storm and distracted.  
So as a gannet, uprising on wings from the waste of the waters,  
Down on the firm-lashed raft she alighted and spake to him, saying:  
“Tell me, unfortunate, how doth it hap Earth-shaking Poseidon  
Thus exceedingly rageth and sends thee so many misfortunes?  
Nay but he ne'er shall destroy thee, how much soever he yearneth.  
Lo now, this shalt thou do—for thou seemst not lacking in wisdom.  
Doff these garments, and letting the raft drift loose to the storm-wind  
Leave her, and trust to thy hands; they shall bring thee in safety by swimming  
Unto the Scherian land, where destiny grants thee a refuge.  
Take this scarf—'tis a tissue ambrosial. Bind it around thee  
Over thy breast, and thou needst not fear to be harmed and to perish.  
Then—so soon as thy hands have grasped securely the dry land,  
Loosen the scarf and flinging it back in the wine-dark ocean  
Far from the edge of the shore, make haste from the spot to avert thee.”

So did she speak, and, leaving the garment behind her, the goddess  
Plunged in the billowing flood once more of the waters of ocean,  
Like to a gannet; and quickly the dark wave hid her beneath it.

Then did he ponder in doubt, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
While despondent he spake to the valiant spirit within him:  
“Ah woe! Surely again some snare contriveth against me  
One of the gods, thus bidding me leap from my firm-lashed vessel.  
Nay, not yet will I do it, for still at a distance I noticed  
Lying the land where Fate (as she said) is to grant me a refuge.  
Lo now, this will I do—for I think it is certainly better:  
While that the timbers shall hold them in all their jointings together,  
Here on the raft I shall stay and endure all hardships and perils;  
Should howbeit the waves break all of the vessel in pieces,  
Then will I swim. I can find no better device and precaution.”

Whilst these things in his mind and his spirit he still was revolving  
Sent an enormous roller the King Earth-shaking Poseidon.  
Terrible, irresistible, vaulted, it toppled upon him.  
Even as chaff that is lying in heaps, when a violent storm-gust  
Seizes the light dry husks and scatters them hither and thither,  
Thus did the wave send flying the beams of the raft; but Odysseus  
Mounting on one of the timbers bestrode it, as riding a racer,  
Stripping himself of his garment, the gift of the goddess Calypso.  
Hastily over his breast then binding the scarf of the sea-nymph  
Into the water he plunged, both hands extended before him,  
Eager to swim. But the King Earth-shaking Poseidon, who saw it,  
Wagging his head in his wrath spake thus to the spirit within him:  
“There! thou hast suffered already—and now go toss on the ocean!  
Swim till thou reachest the dwellings of earth-born children of heaven!  
Not e’en there, do I think, thou’lt carelessly prate of disaster.”  
Thus in his anger he spake, and, lashing his long-maned horses,  
Swiftly was there where standeth his glorious temple at Aegae.

Then did Athena the daughter of Zeus plan other devices.  
Staying the furious courses of all of the rest of the storm-winds,  
Bidding them cease and be still and peacefully lay them to slumber,  
Boreas swift she aroused, and she whitened the billows before him,  
Heaven-descended Odysseus to rescue from death and destruction,  
Wafting him home to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia’s sea-folk.

So two days and two nights did he toss on the mountainous billows  
Drifting, and oft in his spirit the coming of death he foreboded,  
Till, when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed morning,  
Then of a sudden abated the wind, and it ceased, and a calm spread

Breathless around, and the land once more much nearer he sighted,  
Gazing intently ahead when aloft on the crest of a billow.  
Welcome as life, when again it returneth, appeareth to children  
Whose dear father was lying in sickness and suffering anguish,  
Withering slowly away, by the wrath of a deity wounded:  
E'en as they welcome him back, by the gods set free from his trouble,  
So to Odysseus was welcome the sight of the land and the forests.  
Strongly he swam, in his longing to tread with his feet on the dry land,  
Till, when as far from the shore as the voice of a shouter will carry,  
Sudden he heard on the reefs and the shingle the thunder of surges.  
Here was a terrible surf that was crashing on rocks of the mainland,  
Horribly belching, and all was enwrapped in the foam of the salt spray;  
Neither a haven was there for the mooring and shelter of shipping;  
Headlands only he saw and reefs and crags overhanging.  
Then were loosened the limbs and the inmost heart of Odysseus,  
While distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:  
"Ah me! Lo, of the land unhop'd-for vision had granted  
Zeus, and far I had cloven my way in the gulf of the ocean;  
Now from the grey salt sea no place for a landing appeareth;  
All outside it is rugged with crags, and around them the billows  
Thunder and surge, where steeply and smoothly the precipice rises.  
Near it the water is deep, nor might one hope to discover  
Hold for the feet, whereby to escape from the jaws of destruction;  
So that I fear some roller enormous will seize me and hurl me  
On to the sharp-jagg'd rocks, and vain would prove my endeavour.  
Ay, but if further along I shall swim in the hope to alight on  
Beaches that slope to the water or sheltering creeks of the ocean  
Much do I fear some blast of the wind may seize me and bear me,  
Heavily groaning, away once more to the home of the fishes;  
Or peradventure a god might send some monster against me  
Out of the brine, where feedeth her sea-droves Amphitrite.  
How I am hated I know by the King Earth-shaking Poseidon."  
Whilst these things in his mind and his spirit he still was revolving,  
On to the rock-bound shore he was borne by a billow enormous.  
Here had his skin been stript and his bones all broken in pieces,  
Had not the thought been put in his heart by the goddess Athene  
Suddenly forward to dart and to clutch with his hands on a boulder,  
Clinging to which with a groan he awaited the rush of the roller.  
This he withstood and escaped it; but seaward recoiling the billow  
Leapt on him, smote him and hurled him away far out on the ocean.  
E'en as it haps when a cuttle is dragged from its hole by a fisher

*Odyssey* While to its tentacle-tips full many a pebble is clinging,  
Thus by the jags of the rock from the strong bold hands of Odysseus  
Stript was the skin as the mountainous billow descended upon him.  
Now had the hapless Odysseus despite all destiny perished,  
Had not a fortunate thought been sent by the goddess Athene.  
Steering him clear of the surf of the surge that was thundering landward  
Further he coasted along and he gazed at the land to discover  
Beaches that slope to the water or sheltering creeks of the ocean.  
Then at the last to the mouth of a river of beautiful waters  
Swimming he came, and here he believed was the place for a landing;  
Smooth was the rockless beach, and withal from the wind was a covert;  
Soon too, feeling the stream of the river, he prayed in his spirit:  
“Hear me, whoever thou be’st, O King! As thy suppliant I too  
Pray thee to succour me fleeing the deep and the threats of Poseidon.  
E’en by the gods everlasting is every mortal respected  
Should he as wanderer come to entreat them for succour, as I now  
Come to thy river and fall at thy knees, outworn with my labours.  
Nay now pity me, prince, for thy suppliant, lo, I avow me.”  
Thus did he pray, and it slackened the might of its billowy current,  
Spreading before him a calm; and the deity brought him in safety  
Unto the beach at the mouth of the stream—but his knees and his stout hands  
Powerless drooped, for the sea had his inmost heart overmastered;  
Swollen was all of the flesh of his body, and plentiful sea-brine  
Oozed in his mouth and his nostrils, and long time breathless and speechless  
Swooning he lay on the ground, for a terrible weariness seized him.

Now when at last he revived and the soul was recalled to the senses,  
Forthwith loosing again from his bosom the scarf of the goddess  
Into the midst of the tide of the sea-tinged river he launched it.  
Down on the current a great wave bore it, and speedily Ino  
Held it again in her hands. Then back from the river he turned him,  
Knelt on the rushes, and kissing the earth, dear mother of harvests,  
Thus distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:  
“Ah me! what shall betide? What fate in the end will befall me?  
Here if the whole of the night I shall anxiously watch by the river,  
May not the dangerous rime and abundant dews of the morning  
Master the soul that within me already is gasping for faintness?  
Cold too breathes ere morning ariseth the breeze of the river.  
Should I however, ascending the slope to the shade of the forest,  
Seek to recline me and rest in the thick of the bushes, I fear me,  
Cold and weariness gone and sweet sleep stealing upon me,



Unto the ravening beasts I shall fall as a prey and a booty.”  
Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better :  
Up to a coppice he went, and he found trees nigh to the water  
Standing apart in the open, and 'neath two bushes he hid him  
Sprung from the selfsame stock—true olive and wilding of olive.  
These did the might of the wind ne'er breathe through laden with moisture,  
Neither did ever the sun with the shafts of his radiance pierce them,  
Nor did the rain drip through them at all, so densely together  
Woven the one with the other they grew ; and beneath them Odysseus  
Crept, and anon with his hands he had raked him a litter together  
Spacious and deep ; for of leafage was lying a plentiful downfall,  
Such as for two or for three might offer enough of protection  
During the season of storms, how bitter soever the weather.  
This then seeing with joy, long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Laid him to rest in the midst of the leaves, and he piled them around him.  
E'en as a man might cover a brand with the blackened ashes  
Out on a bound of his farm, where living is none of his neighbours,  
Guarding the seed of the fire (else must he rekindle from elsewhere),  
So did he cover him closely with leaves ; and the goddess Athene  
Poured on his eyes sweet sleep, for she wished right soon to release him  
Out of his weary exhaustion ; and gently she covered his eyelids.





# ODYSSEY BOOK VI

**H**ERE then slumbering lay long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
All o'ermastered by sleep and by weariness, while that Athene  
Hastened to visit the land Phaeacia's city and people.  
These once dwelt in the city of spacious squares Hypereia,  
Near the Cyclopiàn people, a race that with pride overweening  
Harried them ever and spoiled them and proved more mighty in warfare.  
Godlike Nausithöus thence moved them and found them an island,  
Scheria, distant from all bread-nourished races of mortals.  
Here did he circle a city with ramparts and builded the houses ;  
Shrines for the gods he erected and meted the bounds of the corn-lands.  
Conquered howbeit by Fate had he gone to the mansion of Hades.  
Now reigned Alcinoüs, who was wise by the counsels of heaven.

His was the mansion she entered, the grey-eyed goddess Athene,  
Planning to bring once more to his home great-hearted Odysseus.  
Straight to a rich-wrought chamber she went, wherein was a maiden  
Slumbering, like to a goddess immortal in form and in feature,  
Nausicaä, sole daughter of Alcinoüs great-hearted.  
Near to her two of her damsels, of beauty endowed by the Graces,  
Lay by the post of the door, and shut was the glittering portal,  
Yet as a breath of the air to the couch of the maiden the goddess  
Glided, and standing anigh to her head these words she addressed her,  
Taking the form of the daughter of Dymas, mariner famous,  
One that in age was her equal and dear to the soul of the maiden ;  
Such was the form, as she spake, of the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“ Nausicaä, how comes it thy mother has borne thee so heedless ?  
Lo, still wholly neglected thy glistering raiment is lying  
While that thy wedding is nigh and thou needst right beautiful garments  
Both for thyself and to give a supply to the friends that escort thee.  
Yea too, such is the way in the which one's good reputation  
Spreadeth abroad, and a daughter rejoiceth her father and mother.  
So come, go we a-washing as soon as the daylight appeareth !  
Lo, I will come as thy comrade and share in the labour, that quickly  
All shall be ready ; for soon we shall see thee a maiden no longer,  
Since thou art woo'd by the best of the whole Phaeacian people,  
Chiefs of the race from the which thou also thy lineage drawest.  
Come and solicit thy father renown'd, that betimes in the morning  
Mules and a wagon be harnessed in readiness, such as to carry

*(Odyssey)*  
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28-35 Girdles and garments and all our bundles of glistening bedding.  
Yea, and for thee 'twere better to drive than wearily wend it  
All upon foot ; for the place of the washing is far from the city."

Thus did she speak, and departing the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Won to Olympus; for here, it is said, the abode everlasting  
Stands of the gods, which winds ne'er shake nor ever a rain-storm  
Wetteth, and never a snowflake falleth, but cloudless the aether  
Spreadeth above, and over it floateth a radiant whiteness.  
Here dwell happy the blessed immortals for ever and ever.  
Hither the goddess betook her whenas she had counselled the maiden.

Now in her glory enthroned came Morning, and soon she awakened  
Fair-robed Nausicaa, who marvelling much at the vision  
Passed to the outer apartment to make all known to her parents,  
Even her father beloved and her mother; and soon did she find them.  
Nigh to the hearth was her mother, amidst of the women her handmaids.  
Spinning a wool of the rich sea-purple. Her father she happed on  
Issuing forth of the palace to join the illustrious chieftains  
Met in a council, to which Phaeacian nobles had called him.  
Nigh to her well-loved father she stood while thus she addressed him :  
" Father beloved, say, wouldst thou not bid them prepare me a wagon  
Lofty and strong on the wheels, our beautiful clothing to carry  
Down to the river—whatever is soiled? I am wishful to wash it.  
Yea and for thee it is seemly, whene'er thou consortest with nobles,  
Sitting at counsellor meetings, to wear clean clothes on thy body.  
Five dear brothers moreover of mine were born in thy palace.  
Two are wedded indeed; but the three are younger and lusty,  
Clamouring alway to have their garments fresh from the washing  
Ere to the dances they go.—Which things were ever my duty."

Thus did she speak, for her gladsome marriage it irked her to mention  
E'en to her father beloved; but he noticed it all, and he answered :  
" Neither the mules do I grudge thee, my child, nor anything other.  
Go, an thou wilt—and the servants shall soon make ready a wagon  
Lofty and strong on the wheels, well fitted besides with an awning."  
Thus did he speak and commanded the servants, who quickly obeying  
Out in the court made ready a wain smooth-running, a wagon  
Harnessed for mules—and the mules were brought and yoked to the carriage.  
Carrying then from her chamber the glistening garments the maiden  
Carefully stowed them away in the smooth-wrought car of the wagon.

Then in a box were placed by her mother provisions delightful,  
Every kind, and the relish she added, and wine she decanted  
Into the skin of a goat; and the maiden ascended the wagon.  
Then in a vial of gold soft oil of the olive she gave her,  
Bidding her bathe and anoint her, and also the women her handmaids.  
So with the whip in her hand and the glistening reins did the maiden  
Whip to a start; and a clatter arose, and the two mules tugging  
Strained unflaggingly forward and carried the clothes and the maiden.  
Neither alone did she fare: she was followed by others, her women.

Now when at last they arrived at the beautiful stream of the river,  
Here the perennial basins they found where waters abundant  
Welled up brightly enough for the cleansing of dirtiest raiment.  
So their mules they unloosened from under the yoke of the wagon,  
Letting them wander at will on the bank of the eddying river,  
Browsing on clover as sweet as the honey, and then from the carriage  
Bearing within their arms to the deep dark water the garments  
Cast them in trenches and trod them in rivalry one with another.  
So, when the raiment was washed and was thoroughly cleansed of the dirt-stains,  
All on the shore of the ocean in order they spread on the shingle  
Where it is washed by the tides of the sea as they sweep to the dry land.  
Then did they bathe, and anointing themselves with the oil of the olive  
Sat them adown to the midday meal on the bank of the river,  
Leaving the garments to dry on the beach in the glare of the sunlight.  
Now when in food they had fully delighted, both she and her maidens,  
Casting aside their scarfs with a ball they betook them to playing,  
White-armed Nausicaa with the choral melody leading.  
E'en as descending a height moves Artemis, darter of arrows,  
Either on Taygetus long-ridged or on huge Erymanthus,  
Taking delight in the chase of the boar and of timorous roe-deer,  
Whilst all round her the daughters of Zeus who beareth the aegis,  
Nymphs of the woodland, play—and Leto sees it rejoicing;  
Even as over the rest uplifting her brows and her forehead  
Easily known in her beauty she stands, though fair be the others,  
Thus shone forth in her beauty the maiden amidst her attendants.

Now when at last it was come to the moment of homeward returning,  
After the mules were yoked and folded the beautiful garments,  
Other was then the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene,  
E'en that Odysseus awaking and seeing the fair-faced maiden  
Her might follow as guide and reach Phaeacia's city.

Seizing the ball, at a maiden among her attendants the princess  
Flung it, but missing the maiden it fell in a bottomless eddy.  
Piercingly all of them shrieked; and godlike Odysseus, awakened,  
Sat straight up and pondered thereon in his heart and his spirit:  
“Ah me! what is the folk whose country I now am arrived at?  
Dwell here savages wanton and wild, despisers of justice?  
Have they a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals?  
Lo, how piercing a cry as of maidens ringeth around me,  
Nymphs peradventure that dwell on precipitous summits of mountains,  
Or by the fountain springs of the rivers and leas of the lowlands;  
Else, maybe, I am near to a folk of articulate language.  
Nay, go to, I will test for myself this matter and view it.”

These words uttered, from under the bushes the godlike Odysseus  
Issued, and breaking a branch with his powerful hand from the thicket  
Girdled his body with leaves, its nakedness striving to cover.  
Thus in the pride of his strength from his lair in the mountain a lion  
Stalks forth soaked with the rain and battered with wind, and his two eyes  
Flame as he prowleth abroad midst droves of the sheep and the oxen  
Or on the track of the deer, and often his belly will bid him  
Making assay on the flocks e'en strong-built granges to enter;  
So to the fair-tressed maidens Odysseus was fain to betake him,  
Though all naked his body—on such distress was he fallen.  
Sight terrific he seemed to the maidens, disfigured with sea-brine.  
Hastily hither and thither in panic they fled to the sand-spits.  
Sole stood firmly the daughter of Alcinous; for Athene  
Gave to her courage of heart and took from her limbs all trembling;  
Facing him calmly she stood; and Odysseus pondered within him  
Whether as suppliant clasping the knees of the beautiful maiden,  
Or as he was, at a distance, to speak soft words of entreaty,  
Begging her show him the city and grant him the gift of a garment.  
Thus as he pondered thereon, this plan seemed surely the better,  
Holding apart, from a distance, to speak soft words of entreaty,  
Since that by clasping her knees he was fearful to anger the maiden.  
Straightway therefore a word both gentle and cunning he uttered:  
“Thee, O Queen, I implore. O . . . whether a goddess or mortal!  
Art thou a goddess—of those who inhabit the infinite heaven—  
Then it is Artemis surely, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty,  
Both in thy form and thy stature and beauty to whom thou art likest.  
Art thou a daughter of man, and dwellest on earth as a mortal,  
Happy I deem, yea three times happy, thy mother and father,



NAUSICAA AND ODYSSEUS





Happy and three times happy thy brothers ; for surely exultant  
Gloweth in gladness the spirit within them, whene'er they behold thee  
Entering into the dance, so lovely a flower of girlhood.  
Yet, ah, how in his heart more happy than every other  
He that with gifts shall prevail and homeward lead thee as lover !  
Never till now have seen mine eyes such beauty in mortal,  
Man nor woman : amazement possesseth me while I behold it.  
Suchlike wonder indeed by Apollo's altar in Delos  
Once I beheld—uprearing its column a sapling of date-palm ;  
(Yea, e'en thither I came, and was followed by many a fighter,  
Holding a course whereon sore sorrow was fated to meet us).  
Even as then this wonder beholding I marvelled in spirit,  
Long time gazing—for ne'er such shaft from the earth shot upward—  
Thus, O lady, I marvel at thee and am greatly astonished,  
Fearing thy knees to approach, though sorrow hath fallen upon me.  
Yester-e'en to the shore I escaped from the wine-dark ocean.  
Nineteen days from the isle Ogygia billows and storm-blasts  
Ceaselessly bore me, and hither at last some deity cast me,  
Planning, meseemeth, that still I shall suffer ; for never, I fear me,  
All of my travail shall end till the gods much more shall accomplish.  
Nay, O Queen, have pity ! To thee, outworn with my labours,  
Lo, as a suppliant first I am come, and of others I know not  
Any, of all of the folk that inhabit this town or the country.  
Show me the city, and give me a garment, to cast it about me,  
Even a rag, or the wrapper perchance that thou broughtst for the linen !  
So shall the gods all blessings bestow that thy soul desireth—  
Husband and home ; and oneness of heart may heaven vouchsafe thee,  
Blessing supreme—since nought can be wished that is greater and better  
While united in heart and in mind are dwelling together  
Husband and wife. 'Tis a sight brings sorrow to wishers of evil,  
Joy to the wishers of good ; but the joy in their hearts is the loudest."

Then spake white-armed Nausicaa, and addressed him in answer :  
"Stranger,—for truly thou seemest a man nor evil nor foolish—  
Zeus, our Father in heaven, alone alloteth to mortals,  
Unto the good as the evil, to each as he willeth, his fortune.  
He, as I doubt not, hath given thee this—thou wilt have to endure it.  
Lo, now—since thou art come and hast reached our country and city,  
Neither of clothes shalt thou fear to be lacking nor aught that thou needest,  
Such as is due to the poor and the wretched from those that he meeteth.  
Gladly the town will I show thee, and tell thee the name of the people :

Ulysses II      Folk Phaeacian dwell in the land and inhabit the city.  
11      I myself am the daughter of Alcinous great-hearted,  
12      Even the king who upholds Phaeacia's might and dominion."

Thus did she speak, and exhorted the fair-tressed girls, her attendants :  
"Tarry, my girls! Why thus at the sight of a man do ye scatter?  
Surely ye never can hold him for one of a nation of foemen!  
Not on the earth there's living the mortal, nor ever shall live one,  
Such as shall come to the shores of the great Phaeacian people  
Bringing the ravage of war; for the gods everlasting befriend us;  
Yea, and apart do we dwell, far over the foam of the ocean,  
Furthest of races, nor ever doth visit us other of mortals.  
Lo—it is some poor wight that is come in his wanderings hither.  
Him it is right that we help. It is Zeus our Father that sendeth  
Strangers and beggars; and e'en though small, some gift will be grateful.  
Therefore give to the stranger to eat and to drink, O maidens;  
Bathe him too in the stream where 'gainst all wind is a covert."  
Thus did she speak, and they halted and called each one to the other;  
Then in a covert they seated Odysseus—for so had commanded  
Nausicaa, fair daughter of Alcinous great-hearted.  
Also beside him they laid for his raiment a mantle and tunic,  
While in a vial of gold soft oil of the olive they gave him,  
Bidding him thoroughly cleanse him and bathe in the stream of the river.

Then forthwith to the maidens the godlike Odysseus addressed him :  
"Handmaids, stand ye apart so long, until I shall wash me  
Off from my shoulders the brine, and well with the oil of the olive  
Rub me—for truly anointing is long to my body a stranger.  
Here in your presence I never will bathe, since shyness forbids me  
Thus to divest me in front of the faces of fair-tressed maidens."  
So did he speak, and returning again to the lady they told it.  
Then in the stream of the river his body the godlike Odysseus  
Cleansed of the brine all over his back and his shoulders encrusted,  
Rinsing his hair from the foam of the barren expanses of ocean.  
So when at last he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
After himself he had clad in the garments, the gift of the maiden,  
Then by Athena the goddess, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty,  
Taller and stronger to view he was made, while down from his head fell  
Clustering thickly the locks of his hair, as the flower hyacinthine.  
Even as gold o'er silver is poured by an artist—a craftsman  
Taught in his art by the god Hephaestus and Pallas Athene

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Manifold skill, and of beauty is every work that he fashions ;  
Thus did she pour forth grace on the shoulders and head of Odysseus.  
Then withdrawing he sat him adown on the shore of the ocean  
Gleaming in beauty and grace, and with marvel the maiden beheld him,  
Nausicaa ; and she spake to the fair-tressed girls, her attendants :  
“ Hearken, my white-armed maidens, attend to the words that I utter !  
Verily nought but the will of immortals that dwell in Olympus  
Granteth this stranger to reach Phaeacia's glorious nation.  
Erstwhile truly methought he was right ill-favoured in person ;  
Now he is like to the gods who the infinite heaven inhabit.  
Would that a man like this might win him the name of my husband,  
Should he be pleased to remain in the land and to settle amongst us !  
Therefore give to the stranger to eat and to drink, O maidens ! ”  
Thus did she speak, and attentive they listened and followed her bidding  
Quickly they set both viands and drink by the side of the stranger.  
Then did he drink and eat, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
Eagerly—seeing in truth no food long while he had tasted.

White-armed Nausicaa in the meanwhile plotted it likewise :  
Folding the clothes, in the car of the beautiful wagon she laid them,  
Ordered the strong-hoofed mules to be yoked, then, mounting the carriage,  
Unto Odysseus she turned and thus she addressed him, and urged him :  
“ Rouse thee, stranger, to come to the city, that now I may bring thee  
Unto my home ; for my father is wise, and there in his palace  
Soon thou shalt make thee acquainted with all Phaeacia's princes.  
Lo now, thus shalt thou act—and thou seemst not lacking in wisdom.  
While in the fields and the meadows we pass and the tillage of farmers  
Keep thee anigh to the maidens, and after the mules and the wagon  
Hasten thy steps and follow us closely the way I shall guide thee.  
After we enter the city . . . around it a battlement runneth  
Lofty, and lying to left and to right is a beautiful harbour.  
Narrow the mouth of the port, and the mole is defended by vessels,  
Twy-beaked galleys that lie on the slip, each one at its station.  
Next is the square, that environs the beautiful shrine of Poseidon,  
Fitted with flags hauled down from the quarries and deeply embedded.  
Here one busily works at the black ships' tackle and rigging,  
Cables and sails, and here one planes and tapers the oar-blades ;  
Since Phaeacian men care nothing for bows and for quivers ;  
Only for masts and for oarage they care and for well-built vessels,  
Proudly rejoicing in which on the grey-green ocean they voyage.  
Their rough slanderous speech will I shun, lest any hereafter

Utter reproach—and in truth right insolent folk are among them.  
Ay, now too peradventure a clown might meet us and mutter :  
‘Lo there, Nausicaa ! Who follows her, burly and handsome ?  
Plainly a foreigner ! Where did she find him ? ’Tis clearly a bridegroom !  
Either she’s got for a guest a deserter from one of the vessels,  
One of a far-off race—since nobody liveth anigh us—  
Or at her urgent entreaty a longed-for god is descended  
Down from the heights of the heaven to have and to hold her for ever.  
Better in sooth if she wanders abroad and procures her a husband  
Elsewhere, seeing she holds in dishonour the men of her country,  
All Phaeacian youths, so many and noble, that woo her.’  
So will they speak ; and for me such words might turn to dishonour ;  
Yea and myself would censure another for doing this action,  
One that in spite of her friends, with her father and mother alive still,  
Mingled with men, till come was the day of her open espousals.  
Give now heed to my words, O stranger, that quickly as may be  
Escort safe and return to thy country my father shall grant thee.  
Nigh to the road thou’lt find a luxuriant grove of Athene,  
Where amid poplars welleteth a fount ; and around is a meadow.  
Near to the place is my father’s domain with a flourishing orchard,  
Lying as far from the town as the voice of a shouter will carry.  
Here shalt thou seat thee and rest thee awhile, till into the city  
I and my maidens be come and arrived at the house of my father.  
Now when at last thou shalt deem us assuredly come to the palace,  
Start once more, and passing within Phaeacia’s city  
Ask for the house of my sire, King Alcinous great-hearted.  
Easily known is the palace, and even a boy will direct thee,  
Even a child, since like to the house none other is builded,  
No Phaeacian dwelling—so goodly the home of the hero  
Alcinous. Now, passing the shade of the court and the outhouse,  
Hastily traverse the hall, until to my mother thou comest.  
Here doth she sit at the side of the hearth in the glow of the firelight  
Spinning a wool of the deep-sea purple, a wonder to gaze at.  
Leaning her chair on a pillar she sitteth with maidens behind her.  
Close to the chair of the queen there leaneth the throne of my father.  
Here doth he sit when he draineth his wine-cup like an immortal.  
Him pass hastily by, but my mother approach, and entreat her  
Clasping her knees with thy hands ; and the joyous day of returning  
Soon shalt thou see—yea, though far distant lieth thy country.  
Shouldst thou be able to gain of my mother her heart and her favour,  
Then good hope will be thine to revisit thy friends and in safety

Win to thy well-built home once more and the land of thy fathers."

Thus did she speak, then raising above her the glistening whip-lash  
Smote at the mules, and they left right quickly the streams of the river.  
Briskly they trotted and briskly with paces inwoven they ambled,  
While with the rein she withheld them, applying the lash with discretion,  
So that the maids and Odysseus behind might easily follow.

Now was a-setting the sun, and they came to the glorious coppice,  
Grove of Athena ; and here did he seat him, the godlike Odysseus.  
Forthwith then did he pray to the daughter of Zeus the Almighty :  
" Daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis, thou Maiden unwearied,  
List, O list to me now—though never thou heardest me aforesaid  
Smit by the billows of ocean, when smote me the King Earth-shaker.  
Grant me to win of the folk Phaeacian favour and pity !"  
So did he speak in his prayer, and she hearkened, the goddess Athene,  
Though not yet to his eyes she appeared in a manifest vision,  
Fearing the brother of Zeus, who still in his furious anger  
Raged at the godlike Odysseus—until he arrived at his homeland.



# ODYSSEY BOOK VII

**T**HERE as he rested and prayed, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
Unto the city the two mules sturdily carried the maiden,  
Till, when at last she was come to the far-famed house of her father,  
Under the portal she halted, and round her collected her brothers,  
Like to immortals; and soon they began from the yoke of the wagon  
Both of the mules to unloose, and to bear to the palace the garments.  
Then did she pass to her chamber, and quickly the hearth was a-blazing,  
Lit by the agéd Apeiran attendant, Eurymedusa.  
Her did the twy-beaked ships once bring from the land of Apeira;  
Then as a prize was she given to Alcinous, who as monarch  
All Phæacia ruled; yea, e'en as a god they obeyed him.  
Ever on white-armed Nausicaa did she wait as attendant.  
Now too kindled she fire and prepared in the chamber the supper.

Then did Odysseus uprouse him to enter the town; and Athene  
Poured thick darkness around him—for ever she favoured the hero—  
Lest Phæacian men high-tempered, meeting a stranger,  
Haply with insolent words might ask him his name and his country.  
Now, when at length he was wishing to enter the beautiful city,  
Nigh to the gate there met him the grey-eyed goddess Athene,  
Likened in form to a maiden, a girl that was bearing a pitcher.  
Right in his path she was standing, and godlike Odysseus addressed her:  
“Wouldst thou conduct me, my child, on my way to the house of the hero  
Alcinous, who they say is the monarch of all of this people?  
I am a wayworn stranger, and hither am come from a country  
Far, far over the ocean; and therefore none do I know here,  
None of the folk that inhabit the town or that work in the corn-lands.”  
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:  
“Yea, Sir stranger, the house to the which thou hast bidden me guide thee  
Gladly I'll show it, for near to my honoured father he liveth.  
Come!—but in silence as much as thou canst! I will hasten before thee.  
See that thou starest at none, nor putttest to any a question,  
Since Phæacians cannot away with an alien stranger,  
Nor do they welcome and kindly receive who comes from a distance.  
Ay but they travel! They cross, on their swift ships proudly reliant,  
Even the sea's great gulf. 'Tis a boon they obtain from Poseidon.  
Yea and as swift as a bird or a thought is the speed of their vessels.”



These words uttered, at once moved onward Pallas Athene,  
 Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the goddess.  
 Neither did any him note of the famed Phaeacian sea-folk  
 Passing the town in the midst of them all, for Athena the fair-tressed  
 Suffered it not, dread goddess, around him outpouring a darkness  
 Wonderful, mystic—for dear to her heart was the godlike Odysseus.  
 Marvelling much did he notice the well-built ships and the havens,  
 Squares for the meetings of men, and the long-drawn line of the ramparts  
 Lofty and all at the top palisaded—a wonder to gaze at.  
 Then, when at last they arrived at the chieftain's glorious mansion,  
 Thus she began to address him, the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
 “ Look, Sir stranger! for here is the house to the which thou hast bid me  
 Show thee the way. Thou'lt find these princes, the children of heaven,  
 Feasting at banquets ; but enter thou boldly, nor feel in thy spirit  
 Fearful—for ever the man who in spirit is bold and undaunted  
 Proveh the better in deeds, ay, e'en if he comes from a distance.  
 First, in the banqueting-hall thou'lt light on the queen of the palace.  
 Arété is the name she is called, and she cometh of parents  
 E'en of the selfsame stock whence Alcinous is descended.  
 First came Nausithous, to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon  
 Born of the fair Periboea—of earth-born women the fairest—  
 Youngest of all of the daughters of Eurymedon great-hearted.  
 (He once reigned as the king of the arrogant nation of Giants ;  
 Ay but infatuate perished the people and perished the Ruler.)  
 So Periboea conceived, and she bare to Poseidon an offspring,  
 Nausithous great-souled, who ruled Phaeacia's people.  
 Nausithous was the father of Alcinous and a brother  
 Rhexénor, who, still new-wedded, was slain by Apollo,  
 Lord of the silver bow ; nor left he an heir, but a daughter  
 Arété, whom Alcinous then took for a consort.  
 Her hath he honoured as surely on earth no other is honoured,  
 None of the wives who in these our days keep house for their husbands.  
 Heartily thus was she ever respected and still is respected,  
 Both by the Ruler himself and by all of her children beloved,  
 Ay and the people ; for all as a goddess regard her and greet her  
 Ever with reverent words when she walketh abroad in the city.  
 Yea and truly she lacks not at all of a good understanding ;  
 Those she befriends, nay even the men, their quarrels she endeth.  
 Shouldst thou be able to gain of the lady her heart and her favour,  
 Then good hope will be thine to revisit thy friends, and in safety  
 Win to thy high-roofed home once more, and the land of thy fathers.”



"NIGH TO THE GATE THERE MET HIM  
THE GREY-EYED GODDESS ATHENE"



These words uttered, departing the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Over the wastes of the sea from the fair Phaeacian island  
Marathon reached, and winning the wide-wayed city of Athens  
Entered the strong-built fane of Erechtheus. Then did Odysseus  
Wend on his way to the house of the king; and he pondered in spirit,  
Ofttimes staying his steps ere reaching the bronze-wrought threshold.  
For as the sheen of the sun or the moon, there floated a glory  
Over the high-roofed palace of Alcinous great-hearted.  
Brazen the walls, which ran from the threshold on this and on that side  
Round to the innermost rooms; and above was a cornice of cyan.  
Golden the portal within that the well-built mansion defended;  
Silver the posts of the door, set fast in the bronze of the threshold;  
Silver the lintel that rested upon them, and golden the handle.  
Dogs each side of the porch were standing, of gold and of silver.  
These Hephaestus himself had devised with his cunning invention,  
Watchers to watch at the palace of Alcinous great-hearted;  
There did they watch all deathless and ageless for ever and ever.  
Close to the inside wall stood seats that on this and on that side  
Reached to the innermost rooms from the threshold, and broidery o'er them,  
Delicate, finely inwoven, was lying, the work of the women.  
Here Phaeacian chiefs were oft to be seen at a banquet  
Eating and drinking—for ever they found an unfailing abundance.  
Here too, fashioned in gold and on fair-built bases of marble,  
Youths were standing and holding uplifted radiant torches,  
Lighting the gloom of the night in the halls of the house for the feasters.  
Two score women and ten had the monarch as thralls in the palace,  
Some that the yellow fruit of the corn-lands grind on a millstone,  
Others that weave at the loom, and at twisting the wool with a spindle  
Seated; but ever they move as the leaves of a high-branched poplar,  
Weaving a linen so fine that the oil flows easily off it.  
Yea, as the men far more are skilful than others of mortals  
Swiftly to drive their ship in the waves, thus also the women  
Others excel at the loom; for to them vouchsafeth Athene  
Deftness in exquisite work and wisdom in cunning invention.  
Outside, nigh to the gate of the court there lieth an orchard  
Large as a field four-acred, enclosed all round by a fencing.  
Here stands many a tree and in tall luxuriance bloometh;  
Pears are here, and pomegranates, and apples with glittering fruitage;  
Figs with a rich sweet harvest and blossoming thickets of olives.  
Here doth the fruit of the trees ne'er perish or fail in the bearing,  
Winter and summer alike perpetual. Ever the West Wind

Bringeth the one to the birth with its breath and ripens the other.  
Pear upon pear matureth with age and apple on apple,  
Fig upon fig, and the grape grows, ripening cluster by cluster.  
Here too, laden with fruit, stands planted a flourishing vineyard.  
Part is a place for the drying—a levelled space in the open,  
Parched by the heat of the sun; in another they gather the bunches,  
Tread in another the vat; and in front hang berries unripened,  
Casting the flower, but the rest is already beginning to purple.  
Skirting the outermost row are beds of an orderly garden  
Planted with many a herb and bright with perennial verdure.  
Here two freshets of water arise: one over the garden  
Scatters its streams, while under the courtyard threshold the other  
Shoots to the high-roofed house and a fount whence draweth the townsman,  
Such in the palace of Alcinous was the bounty of heaven.

There did he wondering stand, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
Then, when at last he had gazed and had marvelled at all in his spirit,  
Hastily over the threshold he stepped and entered the palace.  
Here at the banquet he found Phaeacian leaders and nobles  
Pouring a cup to the keen-eyed Hermes, the Slayer of Argus,  
Whose is the last libation when men are thinking of slumber.  
Up thro' the banqueting-hall long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
Having around him the cloud that was shed by the goddess Athene,  
Went till he came to the queen and the great Phaeacian monarch.  
Then, as he bent embracing her knees with his hands in entreaty,  
Sudden the wonderful cloud rolled back, and it melted from off him,  
While that the banqueters gazed all silent, beholding a man there,  
Gazed as astounded; and thus did Odysseus begin his entreaty:  
“Arete, O, daughter of King Rhexenor, the godlike,  
Lo, to thy lord and thy knees I am come, outworn with my labours,  
Yea and to all of thy guests.—May the gods all happiness grant them  
While they shall live, and dying may each one leave to his children  
House and domain and all of the honours bestowed by the people.  
Nay but vouchsafe me an escort and aid my return to my homeland  
Soon! for afar from my friends long years have I suffered affliction.”  
Thus did he speak, and he sat him adown by the hearth in the ashes  
Close to the fire; and they all kept silent in speechless amazement.

Then at the last out-spake that hero, the old Echenëus;—  
Foremost in age was the hero of all Phaeacian nobles,  
Foremost in speech, and sage in the wisdom of past generations.

Thus with a kindly intent he uplifted his voice and addressed them :

“Alcinous, this surely is nowise right nor is seemly.

Here is a stranger that sits on the ground by the hearth in the ashes,

While expecting thy word each one of us waits and is silent.

Nay now, bid him arise, and a chair bright-studded with silver

Offer the stranger to seat him therein ; and say to the henchmen

One more bumper to mix, and to Zeus who delighteth in thunder

Pour we libation ; for he all suppliants follows with pity ;

Then let the house-dame bring from her stores for the stranger a supper.”

Straightway Alcinous, the revered and powerful monarch,

Hearing it, took by the hand wise-hearted and wileful Odysseus.

Raising him up from the hearth in a chair bright-studded he placed him,

Bidding his son to arise and vacate it, the youthful and manly

Laodamas, who next to him sat, and of all was the dearest.

Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer

Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,

Bidding him wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside him.

Then did the grave house-dame bring bread, and she laid it before him,

Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.

So he did eat and drink, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.

Meanwhile Alcinous the redoubtable called to his henchman :

“Pontonous, come, mix strong wine and serve us a bumper,

Plenty for all of the guests, and to Zeus who delighteth in thunder

Pour we libation ; for he all suppliants follows with pity.”

Thus did he speak, and a wine honey-hearted was mixed by the henchman ;

So to the guests he dispensed, first filling the cups for libation.

Now when at last they had poured and had drunk to their souls' satisfaction,

Then spake Alcinous to the feasters, and thus he addressed them :

“Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and nobles !

Listen, for now I shall utter a thing that my spirit commands me !

Ended to-day is the feast. Go home and betake you to slumber.

Early the morn, still more of the elders assembled together

Here in the hall, we shall give to the stranger a feast, and to heaven

Noble oblations, and then of the escort shall duly bethink us,

Planning it so that the stranger without more toil and affliction

Under an escort of ours once more to the land of his fathers

Safely and swiftly shall come—yea though right far be his country ;

Nor on the way meanwhile shall he evil and injury suffer,

Ere on his native soil he is landed ; but then and thereafter

Suffer he must what is fated and doomed—what the terrible Spinners

*Odyssey* Spun with the thread at his birth, when he came from the womb of his mother.  
Be he however immortal, a being from heaven descended,  
Then is a god some novel device unfolding around us,  
Seeing that even till now they approached us in manifest vision,  
Coming whenever of cattle we made some splendid oblation,  
Feasting among us and e'en at the side of us sitting at table;  
Yea and besides, if it chanced that a lonesome wanderer met them,  
Never disguise did they use; for the race is akin to immortals,  
Like the Cyclopiæ nation and lawless tribes of the Giants."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
"Alcinous, such thought be afar! since verily nowise  
Like to the gods everlasting who dwell in the infinite heaven  
Either in form or in favour am I, but to men that be mortal;  
Yea and the men that ye know of with grief most heavily laden  
These be the mortals to whom I can liken myself in affliction.  
More, far more can I tell of the story of woe that befell me,  
How by the will of the gods full many a hardship I suffered;  
Natheless, leave me in silence to sup, though heavy my heart be,  
Seeing that nought so shameless a thing as a ravening belly  
E'er can be found; for it forceth a mortal to give it attention,  
Though outwearied with toils and his heart o'erladen with sorrow.  
Thus is my heart o'erladen with sorrow, but still doth the stomach  
Bid me to eat and to drink, and all of the ills that I suffered  
Wholly it makes me forget, and to feast to my fill it commands me.  
Leave me, I pray—but arousing yourselves when the morning appeareth  
Help me unfortunate back once more to the land of my fathers.  
There shall my sufferings end—and my life would willingly end too,  
After my home I have seen and my thralls and my high-roofed mansion."  
Thus when he spake all gave him approval and made resolution  
Homeward the stranger to help, since duly and well he had spoken.

So, when at last they had poured, and had drunk to their souls' satisfaction,  
All of the feasters departed to sleep, each one to his homestead,  
Leaving the godlike Odysseus behind in the hall of the palace.  
Here queen Arete and Alcinous great-hearted  
Sat by his side till the gear of the feast was removed by the maidens.  
White-armed Arete then began, and breaking the silence  
Spake, for she wondering saw and remembered the mantle and doublet,  
Beautiful garments whereat she had worked, both she and her maidens.  
Opening therefore her lips these swift-winged words she addressed him:



“First, O stranger, I ask—yea even myself will demand it—  
Who art thou? Whence art thou come? Who gave thee the raiment thou wearest?  
Didst thou not say that thou camest a wanderer over the ocean?”

*Odyssey*

*VI*

*100-110*

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
“Grievous it were, O queen, to relate thee the whole of my story,  
All of the numberless woes that the gods celestial sent me.  
Yet will I answer thy question and tell thee of all that thou askest.  
Far hence over the ocean the isle Ogygia lieth,  
Home of a daughter of Atlas, the guileful goddess Calypso,  
Fair-tressed nymph of the sea—a divinity dreaded; for no one  
Willingly seeketh her love, nor god nor man that is mortal.  
Now, in my uttermost need, to her hearth some deity brought me  
Sole—for my swift-winged ship with the blinding bolt of his thunder  
Zeus in the midst of the wine-dark ocean had smitten and shattered;  
There did the rest, yea all of my valiant shipmates perish.  
Then with my arms to the keel of the twy-beaked vessel I clipt me.  
Nine days long was I borne; on the tenth in the blackness of midnight  
Nigh to the isle was I brought by the gods, where artful Calypso  
Dwelleth—the fair-haired nymph, divinity dread, who received me,  
Tenderly cherished and nourished me—yea and also she promised  
Even to make me immortal and ageless for ever and ever;  
Yet did she never persuade me nor soften the heart in my bosom.  
Seven the years unbroken that here I remained, and for ever  
Wetted with weeping my raiment, the magical gift of Calypso.  
Now when the eighth year came with the slow revolution of seasons,  
Then did she bid me depart, yea urged me to haste my departure,  
Moved by a message from Zeus, or her mind its purpose had altered.  
So on a firm-lashed raft did she launch me, and found me in plenty,  
Bread and wine honey-sweet; and she clothed me in magic apparel;  
Then did she send me a favouring breeze, both gentle and kindly.  
Seven and ten long days did I voyage the waste of the waters,  
Till, on the eighteenth day, I beheld far shadowy mountains,  
These of this country of yours—and the spirit within me exulted.  
Ah ill-fated! for verily still I was doomed to acquaint me  
Often with grief—such woes did he send, Earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Raising against me the winds and staying my path on the ocean;  
Yea and a monstrous sea he aroused, nor longer the billows  
Suffered me still with the groans of despair to remain on the vessel.  
Her did a storm-blast shatter and scatter. I plunged in the ocean,  
Swimming, and mighty the gulf I had cloven, when near to the dry land,

*Odyssey* Yea, to this country of yours, I was brought by the wind and the rollers.  
*VI* Here, if to land I had ventured, the surge on the shore had o'erwhelmed me.  
*VI* Hurling me onto the terrible rocks of a desolate region ;  
Hastily therefore retreating I swam, till I came in my swimming  
Unto to a river, and here, as it seemed, was the place for a landing ;  
Smooth was the rockless beach and withal from the wind was a covert.  
Landing I fell, and I lay collecting my senses ; and o'er me  
Gathered ambrosial night ; then afar from the rain-fed river  
Climbing I laid me to sleep in the thick of the bushes, around me  
Pouring the leaves ; and a god shed over me infinite slumber.  
Here in the leaves, to my inmost heart fordone with my labours,  
Soundly the livelong night did I sleep, till the dawn and till midday ;  
Yea, when already was sinking the sun sweet slumber released me.  
Then did I see by the ocean thy daughter's maiden attendants  
Sporting, and she in the midst of them all seemed like to a goddess.  
Her I entreated for pity, nor failed she of good understanding ;  
Ay and thou wouldst not expect of a youthful person that meets thee  
Thus to behave, since ever the young are wont to be thoughtless.  
Freely she gave me of bread and of glittering wine in abundance,  
Bade me to bathe in the river, and then these garments she gave me.  
Lo, I have spoken—and, much as it pains me, the truth I have uttered.”

Then King Alcinous made answer, and thus he addressed him :  
“ Stranger, herein forsooth did a due and a right understanding  
Fail in my child, that she guided thee not with the women, her handmaids,  
Hither to this our house ; for to her first mad'st thou entreaty.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Hero ! for this, I beseech thee, upbraid not the excellent maiden,  
Seeing she bade me indeed with the women attendants to follow ;  
I was unwilling myself, since truly I feared, and it shamed me  
Lest peradventure the sight might darken with anger thy spirit.  
Terribly jealous we seem, all earth-born races of mortals.”  
Then King Alcinous made answer, and thus he addressed him :  
“ Stranger, in sooth not such is the heart in the bosom within me  
Wantonly thus to be wroth. Fair measure is better in all things.  
Ay and by Father Zeus, by Athena and Phoebus Apollo,  
Would that a man like thee, who art minded, meseemeth, as I be,  
Taking my daughter to wife might will as my son to content him  
Here to remain ! I am ready to give both cattle and homestead  
Shouldst thou consent to remain—though none shall compel thee unwilling.  
No Phaeacian—Zeus our Father in heaven forbid it !

Nay, to assure thee of this, will I straightway order the escort  
Now for the morrow ; and while with a drowsiness thou overmastered  
Liest asleep, they, sweeping the calm of the ocean, shall bear thee  
Unto thy land and thy home, or whither thy soul desireth,  
Ay though farther by far it is distant than even Euboea,  
Land that of all lies farthest—so say those men that beheld it,  
Those of this people of mine who once fair-haired Rhadamanthys  
Thither conveyed, Tityos, huge offspring of Gaia, to visit.  
Thither they came and the journey without all labour accomplished  
E'en on the selfsame day and finished the voyaging homeward.  
Thus of thyself thou'lt learn that my ships all others outrival,  
Ay and my youths all others at tossing the brine with the oar-blade."

So did he speak, and for joy long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Offered to heaven a prayer and uttered aloud his entreaty :  
" Father Zeus, I beseech thee that all he hath said shall accomplish  
Alcinous, since thus on the earth, dear mother of harvests,  
Ne'er shall his glory be dimmed, and again I shall come to my homeland."

So these twain held converse together the one with the other.  
White-armed Arete meantime commanded her maidens  
Setting a bedstead under the porch fair blankets upon it  
Purple in colour to cast, and over them coverlets spreading,  
Mantles of wool moreover to lay enwrapping them warmly.  
So from the hall went quickly the handmaids carrying torches.  
Then, when a thick soft bed they had strown, all busily toiling,  
Unto Odysseus they came, and thus exhorting addressed him :  
" Up now, stranger ! Thy bed is prepared. Go, lay thee to slumber."  
Thus did they speak, and a thing right welcome it seemed to repose him.  
There then slumbering lay long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Under the echoing porch on a bedstead of beautiful carvings.  
Alcinous too slept in the innermost room of the palace,  
Where at his side was arrayed by his lady her bedding and bedstead.



# ODYSSEY BOOK VIII

**N**OW when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Rose from his couch King Alcinous the revered and the mighty,  
Rose too heaven-descended Odysseus, the sacker of cities.  
Then did the monarch revered lead forth to the place of the galleys  
Where Phaeacian elders had built their court of assembly.

Here they arrived and on seats well-polished of marble they set them  
Closely together. But thoro' the town went Pallas Athene,  
Like to the herald himself of the wise Phaeacian monarch,  
Planning to bring to his home once more great-hearted Odysseus.  
So to them all and to each she addressed her and made proclamation :  
“ Hither assemble, ye leaders and high Phaeacian chieftains !  
Come to the place of the council, and there ye shall learn of the stranger  
Newly arrived at the palace of Alcinous wise-hearted,  
One that hath voyaged the seas and in favour is like the immortals.”  
Thus as she spake, in the minds of them all she excited a longing :  
Speedily filled were all of the places of council, and benches  
Thronged by the gathering crowds, and soon full many in wonder  
Gazed at the wise-souled son of Laertes ; and Pallas Athene  
Wonderful beauty and grace poured forth on his head and his shoulders,  
Making him larger in person to look at and greater in stature,  
So as to gain him the favour of all Phaeacian people,  
Ay and their awe and respect—and so as to win him the contests  
Many and great wherewith Phaeacians tested Odysseus.  
Now when they all had collected together and formed an assembly  
Rose King Alcinous in the midst and thus he addressed them :  
“ Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains,  
So that I utter the things that the heart in my bosom commands me.  
Lo, this stranger—I know not his name—is arrived at my palace,  
Wandering come from the land of a nation of dawn or of sunset.  
Escort he urgently begs us to give and to promise for certain.  
So, as was ever the wont in the past, let us grant him an escort,  
Since no other of mortals that ever arrived at my palace  
Here lamenting remained long time for the want of a convoy.  
Come, let us drag to the vast salt ocean a black-hulled vessel  
New from the stocks, and of youths let two and fifty as oarsmen  
Out of the people be chosen, who best have proved them aforetime.  
Then, so soon as the men have fastened the oars to the thole-pins,  
Leave ye the vessel, and come to my palace, and make preparation

*Odysseus* There for a hasty repast ; and provision for all will I offer.  
Such the commands that I give to the youths ; but the others, whoever  
Beareth the sceptre as chief, in the halls of my beautiful mansion  
Gather together and there entertain at a banquet the stranger.  
Neither let any refuse. And summon the singer, the godlike  
Demodocus ; for to him as to none God granted by singing  
All to enrapture, whenever his spirit to singing incites him."

These words uttered he led from the council ; him followed the chieftains  
Bearing their rods, and a herald departed to summon the singer.  
Then were chosen the youths, and two and fifty in number  
Went, as he bade, to the beach of the barren expanse of the ocean.  
Now when at last they had gotten them down to the sea and the vessel,  
Firstly the black-hulled vessel they drew to the deep salt water,  
Then, embarking the mast and the sails on the black-hulled vessel,  
All of the oars to the tholes they attached with the lashings of leather,  
Each in its place, and the white sails hoisting aloft on the yardarm  
Anchored her far from the shore in the midst of the haven, and forthwith  
Went on their way to the mansion of Alcinous wise-hearted.  
Filled were all of the porches and garths and the buildings, as countless  
Gathered together the guests, both many a youth and an elder.  
These to regale had the king of his fat sheep slaughtered a dozen,  
Eight of his white-tusked swine, and a yoke of his slow-paced cattle ;  
These they had flayed and prepared and had furnished a beautiful banquet.

Now did the herald approach conducting the sweet-voiced minstrel.  
Loved by the Muse was the bard ; but she gave him of good and of evil :  
Reft was the light of his eyes, but with sweetest song he was dowered.  
Forthwith Pontonous set a chair bright-studded with silver  
Midst of the feasters, and close to a high roof-pillar he placed it.  
Then from a peg down-hanging the clear-toned lute he suspended  
Over his head, and he showed him to reach with the hand and to grasp it.  
Thus did the henchman, and bringing a basket and beautiful table  
Gave him of wine in a goblet to drink when his spirit enjoined him.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Stirred by the Muse was the singer to sing of the glories of heroes,  
Sing of the theme whose fame to the infinite heaven was reaching,  
Even the strife of Odysseus and great Pelean Achilles,—  
How at a beautiful feast of the gods contending in anger  
Words outrageous they spake ; and the warrior-king Agamemnon

Joyed in his spirit, beholding the best of the Greeks in contention.  
This had the answer of Phoebus Apollo in beautiful Pytho  
Told him, when passing the threshold of stone he had entered the temple  
Seeking the rede of the god ; for beginning to roll was disaster  
Over the Trojans and Greeks by the counsels of Zeus the Almighty.  
Such was the lay that he sang, that singer renowned ; but Odysseus,  
Grasping with stalwart hand at the folds of his mantle of purple,  
Over his head down drew it, till all of his face he had covered,  
Loth that the men might mark tears falling from under his eyebrows.  
Yea and as oft as the godlike singer had ceased from his singing,  
Drying the tears and back from his head withdrawing the mantle,  
Taking a two-cupped goblet he poured to the gods a libation.  
Yet, when again a beginning he made—for to sing they impelled him,  
All Phaeacia's nobles, so much in his lays they delighted—  
Then did Odysseus, enwrapping his head once more, make moaning.  
Thus did he sit there weeping, unnoted by all of the others,  
All save Alcinous, who alone was aware and observed it,  
Sitting anigh to his side ; and hearing him heavily groaning,  
Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's princes :  
“ Harken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains.  
Now in us all is the spirit content with abundance of feasting,  
Ay and content with the lute, loved consort of bountiful banquets.  
So let us forth from the palace and prove our prowess at contests,  
Every kind, for the stranger to tell, when he reaches his homeland,  
Unto his friends, how skilful we are, all others excelling,  
Either to box or to wrestle or leap, or to run in the foot-race.”

These words uttered, he led from the hall, and they followed the monarch.  
Then, when the clear-toned lute on the peg he had hung, did the herald,  
Grasping the hand of the singer and guiding him forth from the palace,  
Lead him away by the road on the which were wending the others,  
All Phaeacia's nobles, who, eager to witness the contest,  
Pressed to the place of the games ; and a crowd came thronging behind them,  
Thousands and thousands ; and youths stood forth right many and noble :  
Acraoneos upstood, and Ocyalus and Elatreus,  
Nauteus and Prymneus and Anchialus and Eretmeus ;  
Then Anabésineos and Thoön, and Ponteus and Proreus ;  
Amphialus, whose father was Tekton's son Polynéus ;  
Euryalus too, equal of Ares the Slayer of mortals,  
Naubolus' son, uprose, surpassing in form and in favour  
All Phaeacia's fairest but Laodamas the unrivalled.



Last rose three of the children of Alcinous the heroic,  
Laodamas, Halius, and the godlike youth Clytonéus.

These then firstly of all made trial of speed in the foot-race.  
Straight from the start all straining their utmost they raced and together  
Over the plain went flying and raising behind them a dust-cloud.  
Fleetest of all in the race was by far Clytonéus the peerless ;  
Far as the length of a furrow that mules might draw in a fallow  
Darting ahead he arrived at the crowd, outstripping the others.  
Then did they test their strength in the wrestler's toilsome contest.  
Here it was Euryalus that of all of the strong was the strongest.  
Far to the fore of the others was Amphialus in the leaping,  
While with cast of the quoit far best of them all was Elatreus.  
Best at the boxing was Laodamas, brave son of the monarch.

Now when the hearts of them all were fully content with the contests  
Thus spake Laodamas and addressed them, the son of the monarch :  
" Hither, my friends ! Let us ask if in feats athletic the stranger  
Knowledge possesseth and skill. Not feeble in frame he appeareth.  
Look at the thigh and the leg and the arm from the hand to the shoulder !  
Stalwart the neck and enormous its might ; nor at all doth his manhood  
Lack of its prime ; but his vigour is broken by many a hardship ;  
Neither, believe me, is aught to be found which worse than the ocean  
Ruins the strength of a man, how hardy soever his body."  
Forthwith Euryalus made answer and thus he addressed him :  
" Laodamas, full wise is thy word and is spoken in season.  
Nay but approach him thyself and accost him and give him a challenge."  
Straight, as he heard these words, did the gallant son of the monarch  
Step to the fore, and standing in front of Odysseus address him :  
" Come, Sir stranger, and make thou a trial thyself in a contest,  
Beest thou practised in any—and surely thou knowest of contests,  
Seeing that nought for a man is a glory, as long as he liveth,  
Greater than suchlike deeds with his hands or his feet to accomplish.  
Nay, come, make but a trial—and scatter the gloom of thy spirit.  
Not much longer deferred is thy homeward return, for already  
Launched is the ship and already equipped are waiting thy shipmates."  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Laodamas, why thus do ye challenge me, only to mock me ?  
Mourning and grief are filling my mind much more than a contest,  
Since right many a woe did I suffer and many a hardship ;  
Yea and amidst these throngs with a craving at heart for my homeland  
Now I am sitting, a suppliant still of the king and his people."



ODYSSEUS TAKES PART IN THE CONTESTS



Then spake Euryalus, to his face thus taunting Odysseus :  
“ Nay, O stranger, and truly I liken thee not to a mortal  
Practised in any of all of the contests known to the nations ;  
Rather to one who frequents with his well-benched vessel the harbours,  
Skipper, methinks, of a folk of the sea who traffic as chapmen,  
Mindful of nought but the bales and careful of nought but the cargo,  
Ay and the grab and the gain. Sooth, thou wert never an athlete ! ”  
Glaring askance at the man thus answered the wileful Odysseus :  
“ Stranger, thy speech is indecent. Thou seemest an insolent mortal.  
So was it ever ! The gods vouchsafe not gifts that be gracious  
All to the one—both beauty and wit and the skill of a speaker.  
One is by nature a man of contemptible presence, but heaven  
Crowneth his words with enchantment of grace ; and the people that hear him  
Gaze in delight as he speaks with an easy and modest assurance  
Eloquent words ; him only they see midst all the assembly ;  
Him, as he walks in the city, they view, as it were an immortal.  
Then will another in beauty resemble a god of Olympus,  
Yet, for his words—no garland of gracefulness resteth upon them.  
Such is thy lot : for in beauty preëminent (comelier scarcely  
Heaven itself might make thee) in mind thou art utterly futile.  
See ! thou stirrest my spirit to wrath in the bosom within me,  
Prating indecently. No ! not a churl unpractised in contests,  
Such as thou sayest, am I—but, I trow, in the rank of the foremost  
Ever I stood in the days when I trusted my hands and my manhood.  
Now am I holden of pain and affliction ; for sorely I suffered,  
Tossed on the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean.  
Yet, e’en so, though many my woes, I will enter the contest,  
Since I am stung to the heart, and my wrath is aroused by thy prating.”

Spake and arose ; nor doffed he his mantle, but seized on a discus  
Greater than others and thicker and weightier not by a little  
Than Phaeacians use competing the one with the other.  
Swinging it strongly around, from his sinewy hand he released it.  
Booming it flew, while down to the ground crouched low in amazement  
All those masters of oars, those famed Phaeacian seamen,  
Under the rush of the stone ; and it flew far over the limits,  
Speeding so swift from his hand. And the casts were marked by Athene,  
Likened in outward form to a man, and she spake and addressed him :  
“ E’en might one that is blind such mark, O stranger, discover,  
Groping around. Not lost in the throng of the others it lieth,  
Nay but afar to the fore. Canst hope this time to be victor.

*Odysseus* Never a man of them all will be able to pass it, or reach it.”  
*Od.* Thus did she speak, and he joyed, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
*Lines 8-16* Glad to behold in the crowd some favouring friend to applaud him.  
Then with a lightened heart to the youths Phaeacian turning :  
“There now ! Beat it, my lads ! Soon cometh another to follow !  
Even as far as the first will I hurl it, or farther, believe me,  
Ay and if any will come, if his heart and his spirit incite him  
Trial to make, let him come—so mightily stirred is my anger—  
Whether to box or to wrestle or race—what he will !—for I care not—  
Any of all of the others !—but Laodamas be excepted !  
He is my host. Is it seemly to fight with the man that befriends one ?  
Verily only a fool or a fellow worthless by nature  
Thus would offer a challenge of strife to the friend that received him  
Here in an alien land. ’T would sever him clean from his fortune.  
All of the others can come ! I will neither refuse nor disdain them.  
Nay, I am fain to acquaint me with all and to prove them in public.  
Nor am I utterly wanting in every manly achievement.  
Well do I know as an archer a bow well-polished to handle.  
First was I ever to smite with the arrow my man in the combat,  
Warring with hostile hosts—ay, even if many companions  
Stood there close to my side, all aiming with shafts at the foemen.  
Only Philóctetes as an archer excelled me whenever  
There in the country of Troy we Achaeans contended as bowmen.  
Yea of the archers on earth I avow me as easily foremost,  
All now living amidst bread-nourished races of mortals.  
Only with heroes of old am I nowise willing to match me,  
Neither with Heracles nor the famed Oechalian monarch.  
These with the gods everlasting themselves contended as bowmen ;  
Wherefore suddenly perished the prince, great Eurytus, neither  
Age crept slowly upon him at home, for in anger Apollo  
Killed him because he had ventured to challenge the god as an archer.  
Further I hurl with a lance than another can shoot with an arrow.  
Only on foot do I fear lest some Phaeacian runner  
Leave me behind, for indeed I am shamefully broken and weakened  
Tossing so long on the waves ; nor with food in sufficing abundance  
Found was my ship ; so loosened is every joint of my body.”

Thus did he speak, and they all stood utterly silent and speechless,  
Till King Alcinous found words to reply and addressed him :  
“Stranger, assure thee ! for nothing displeasing thou speakest amongst us,  
Wishing to give fair proof of the prowess that ever attends thee,

Wroth with the fellow who here in the lists and in public before thee  
Tauntingly spake, in a manner in which would speak of thy prowess  
None, if he e'er was accustomed to utter a word that is seemly.  
Now come, mark what I say. It will give thee a tale to another  
Warrior friend to relate, when at home in the hall of thy palace,  
Sitting at supper by side of thy well-loved wife and thy children,  
This our prowess thou callest to mind and the feats that on us too  
Zeus hath bestowed, as he did in the days of the fathers before us.  
Neither as boxers we boast us unrivalled nor perfect as wrestlers,  
Only in fleetness of foot we excel and in sailing a vessel;  
Ever is feasting a thing that delights us, and music and dancing;  
Changes of raiment we love, warm baths and luxurious slumber.  
Come now, all of the deftest to tread Phaeacian measures,  
Dance for us, dance! that the stranger may see and relate, when he cometh  
Unto his friends, what skill we possess, all others excelling,  
Both in the sailing of ships and in running and dancing and singing.  
Also for Demodocus let the clear-toned lute by the herald  
Quickly be fetched; it is lying, I ween, in the hall of the palace."

Thus spake Alcinous the heroic. The herald uprising  
Started to bring for the singer the hollow harp from the palace.  
Then upstanding, the stewards of games—nine judges, elected  
Out of the people, by whom in the lists all duly was ordered—  
Levelled a space for the dance, and a fair broad ring they encircled.  
Now did the herald approach and the clear-toned lute that he carried  
Give to the blind old singer, who stepp'd to the midst—and around him  
Boys in the bloom of their youth took stand right skilful in dancing;  
So with a wonderful measure they smote on the ground, and Odysseus  
Gazed at the flash and the twinkle of feet, and he marvelled in spirit.

Then to his harp uplifting his beautiful voice did the singer  
Sing of the passion of Ares for fair-crowned Queen Aphrodite,  
How they as lovers at first held tryst at the house of Hephaestus  
Secretly meeting; and how by his gifts he prevailed and dishonour  
Brought on the bed of her lord; but as messenger hasted to tell him  
Eëlios, who had noted them meeting in tender embracement.  
Then did Hephaestus, as soon as the grievous tidings had reached him,  
Go to his forge, devising revenge in the depths of his bosom.  
Here on the stithy he set the enormous anvil and forged him  
Fetters not to be broken or loosed, to entrap and to hold them.  
Now when at last he had fashioned the toils, in his anger at Ares,

Into the chamber he entered wherein, as of old, was his bedstead.  
Here to the posts of the bed, all round it, he fastened the netting;  
Much of it also he fastened above it, attached to a rafter,  
Fine as the web of a spider, that none could ever perceive it  
E'en of the blessed immortals: so cunningly fine was it fashioned.  
So, when at last he had fastened the toils all over the bedstead,  
Then he pretended to go to the well-built city of Lemnos,  
Land that was dear to his heart—far dearer than every other.  
Neither was blind as a watcher the god, gold-glistening Ares.  
Seeing Hephaestus, the worker renowned, set forth on a journey,  
Speedily unto the house of the far-famed god he betook him  
Filled with the longing of love for the fair-crowned queen Cytherea.  
Newly arrived from the home of her father, the mighty Cronion,  
Resting she quietly sat; and he entering into the mansion  
Tenderly clung to her hand; then he opened his lips and addressed her:  
“Come, let us go, my beloved, and lie on the bed and enjoy us!  
Nowhere nigh is Hephaestus, but started already for Lemnos,  
Gone to the Sintian folk, that people of barbarous language.”  
Thus did he speak, and a thing right pleasant it seemed to the goddess.  
So they ascended the bed and reclined them to sleep; but the netting,  
Cunningly wrought by the crafty Hephaestus, descended upon them:  
Suddenly gone was the power of lifting a limb, or of moving.  
Then at the last they perceived it when all too late to escape it;  
Ay and already at hand was the famed deft-handed Hephaestus,  
Back from his journey returned ere reaching the island of Lemnos.  
Eëlios on the watch had remained and had brought him the tidings.  
Homeward straight he returned with a heart sore troubled within him;  
Up to the portal he strode, and he stood; fierce anger possessed him;  
Then with a terrible cry to the gods of Olympus he shouted:  
“Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blessed,  
Come and behold! ’Tis a matter to laugh at, but not to be suffer’d.  
Lo now, me that am lame this daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite,  
Ever dishonours and loveth instead man-murdering Ares,  
Since he is fair to the sight and in limb he is straight; but a body  
Weakly was mine from my birth—Nor verily blame I another,  
Only my parents. I would they had never begotten and borne me!  
Come! ye shall see these twain now lying in loving embracement;  
Here on my bed they are mounted—behold! At the sight I am maddened!  
Scarce for a moment more, do I think, they are longing to lie here,  
E’en though hotly in love—nor quickly again will be longing  
Thus to be bedded together. But here they are trapped and imprisoned



Till that her father repay, to the last one, every bride-gift,  
All that I left in his hands as the price of the impudent baggage—  
Ay, for his daughter is fair, but she knows not to bridle her passions.”  
Thus did he speak, and the gods to his brass-floor'd mansion collected :  
Hither Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, hastened and Hermes,  
Bringer of fortune, and hither the prince far-working Apollo,  
While that behind with a womanly shame stay'd every goddess.  
Soon at the porch were standing the deities, bringers of blessings.  
Then an unquenchable laughter arose mid the blesséd immortals  
While they beheld the device that was wrought by the cunning Hephaestus,  
Looking whereon thus whispered the one to the other beside him :  
“Ill deed prospereth never ; the slow oft catcheth the nimble :  
Even as now by the tardy Hephaestus o'ertaken is Ares,  
Ares, the swiftest of all of the gods that inhabit Olympus,  
Caught in the toils of the Limper—and compensation he oweth.”  
Thus conversing together they whispered, the one to the other ;  
Then spake lordly Apollo, the son of Cronion, to Hermes :  
“Zeus-born Hermes, the herald of heaven and bringer of blessings,  
Say now, feelest thou a longing in such strong fetters imprisoned  
Lying beside her in bed to embrace Aphrodite the golden ?”  
Him thus answered the herald of heaven, the Slayer of Argus :  
“Had I but only the luck, O lord, far-darting Apollo !  
E'en though triple in number the toils—yea endless—that held me ;  
E'en though all of you gods stood gazing, and every goddess,  
Give me to lie by her side and embrace Aphrodite the golden !”  
Thus did he speak, and anew fell laughter upon the immortals,  
All but Poseidaon ; unsmiling he stood and entreaty  
Made to Hephaestus the cunning to loosen the fetters of Ares.  
Thus then raising his voice these swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Loose him, I pray ! and I promise that whatsoever thou biddest,  
All he shall pay that is held to be fair with the gods everlasting.”  
Him then addressing in turn gave answer the famous Craftsman :  
“Nay but, Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, thou shouldst not demand it !  
Worthless is ever a pledge that is offered by one that is worthless.  
How can I hold thee bound in the eyes of the blesséd immortals  
Should our Ares depart and escape both fetters and forfeit ?”  
Him then again gave answer the King Earth-shaking Poseidon :  
“Nay but, Hephaestus, if ever it hap that avoiding the forfeit  
Ares elude thee, I promise myself all dues to repay thee.”  
Him then addressing again gave answer the famous Craftsman :  
“Truly 'tis neither becoming nor possible this to refuse thee.”

These words uttered, the mighty Hephaestus unfastened the fetters.  
Then did the twain, set free from the grievous constraint of the netting,  
Spring straight upward and vanish—To Thracia Ares departed,  
She to the Cyprian isle, Aphrodite, the lover of laughter,  
Even to Paphos—for here is her shrine and her altar of incense.  
Here did the Graces receive her and bathe and anoint her with unguent  
Not of the earth ; but it lieth as bloom on the limbs of immortals.  
Then did they clothe her in beautiful raiment, a wonder to gaze at.

Such was the story he sang, this singer renown'd, and Odysseus  
Listened rejoicing in spirit, as also the rest of the hearers,  
All those lovers of oars, those famed Phaeacian seamen.

Bidden was now Halios, and Laodamas, by the monarch  
Single to dance ; for in dancing was no one able to match them.  
These then, into the hand when a beautiful ball they had taken,  
Purple in hue, by the skilful artificer Polybus fashioned,  
One of them hurled it aloft to the shadowy clouds of the heaven,  
Bending him back for the throw. From the ground upleaping, the other  
Easily caught it before with his feet on the earth he alighted.  
Now when the trial was ended of casting the ball straight upward,  
Then did they set them to dance on the earth's all-nourishing bosom,  
Rapidly flinging in turn, while comrades clapping in measure  
Stood in the lists, and around them arose a tumultuous uproar.  
Turning to Alcinous, then addressed him the godlike Odysseus :  
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
Truly thou claimst for thy people a skill unrivalled in dancing,  
Yea, for the fact is approved : as I look I am filled with amazement."  
Thus as he spake, the revered and powerful monarch exulted.  
Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's nobles :  
"Hearken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains !  
Truly the stranger appeareth endowed right richly with wisdom.  
Come, let us find him a gift, as is meet and is due to a stranger !  
Seeing that over the land are twelve illustrious princes  
Ruling as chiefs, and myself as a thirteenth wielding the sceptre,  
Each might give to the stranger a robe well-washed and a doublet,  
Also of precious gold be the weight of a talent collected.  
Quickly together let all of the presents be brought, that the stranger  
Having them safe in his hands may joyfully go to his supper.  
Thou too, Euryalus, shouldst find soft words to appease him,  
Ay and a gift, for in truth was the speech that thou madest unseemly."

So did he speak, and the others assented thereto and approved it,  
Each of the nobles despatching a herald to fetch him the presents;  
Neither did Euryalus keep silence, but thus he addressed him:  
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
Lo, I perform thy behest and will make to the stranger atonement.  
This is the present I offer—a hanger of bronze with a handle  
Silver-embossed, and around it, of new-sawn ivory fashioned,  
Waveth a sheath. He will find it methinks no worthless possession."  
These words spoken, he handed the broadsword studded with silver  
Unto Odysseus, and loudly with swift-winged words he addressed him:  
"Hail, Sir stranger! If any at all of the words that I uttered  
Pained thee, I would that the winds might carry it hence in a storm-blast,  
Yea and I wish thee a speedy return to thy wife and thy homeland.  
Grant it the gods! for indeed too long thou hast suffered in exile."  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
"Hail thou also, my friend, and the gods all happiness grant thee!  
Never, I hope, will it pain thee in future when missing thy hanger,  
E'en this blade that thou gav'st while offering words of atonement."  
Speaking he hung to his shoulder the broadsword studded with silver.  
Now was a-setting the sun, and arrived had the glorious presents;  
These to the house of the king were borne by magnificent heralds;  
Then by the hands of the children of Alcinous the unrivalled  
Laid at the side of their mother revered was the beautiful treasure.

Following now in the steps of the mighty and reverend monarch  
All to the palace returned, and on high-raised seats they reclined them.  
Then did the powerful king call Arete and address her:  
"Hither, my queen—bring hither a chest right goodly—thy best one—  
Placing therein for the stranger a well-washed robe and a doublet.  
Then on the hearth set boiling a cauldron for heating of water.  
After a bath he shall look at the gifts all lying in order,  
All of the presents bestowed by the high Phaeacian nobles;  
So will he joy in the feast and in hearing the lay of the singer.  
Also a thing of my own will I give—this beautiful goblet  
Solid of gold—that of me it remind him whene'er he shall use it  
Pouring at home a libation to Zeus and the other immortals."  
Thus did he speak, and the queen Arete ordered her maidens  
Station a three-legged pot on the fire, as quickly as might be.  
They on the glow of the hearth put a tripod, and water for bathing  
Poured in the kettle and brought fresh faggots and set them a-blazing.  
Licked was the cauldron's belly by flames, and warmed was the water.

*Odyssey* Meantime Arete brought forth a magnificent coffer  
1111 Out of her room for the stranger, and laid fair presents within it,  
228-479 Even the raiment and gold that the chiefs Phaeacian gave him,  
Adding thereto of her treasures a beautiful mantle and doublet.  
Then did she open her lips and with swift-winged words she addressed him :  
“ Lo now, look to the lid and a cord cast quickly around it,  
Lest on the voyage perchance some robber despoil thee, if haply  
Slumbering sweetly aboard of the black-hulled vessel thou liest.”  
Hearing the words that she spake long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Forthwith fastened the lid and a cord cast quickly around it  
Cleverly tied with a knot he had learnt of the beautiful Circe.  
Scarce was it done when the house-dame entered to fetch him for bathing,  
Bidding him come to the tub ; and he joyed in his spirit beholding  
Warm bath-water—to such an attention all unaccustomed  
Since he had come from the home of the fair-haired goddess Calypso.  
(While he was there he had comfort continual, like an immortal.)

Now when Odysseus was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
Round him the maids cast raiment—a beautiful mantle and tunic.  
So from the bath he returned, and he came to the chiefs at their wine-cups  
Even as Nausicaa in her beauty, the dower of heaven,  
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment.  
There as he passed her she looked at Odysseus with wondering glances ;  
Then did she open her lips and with swift-winged words she addressed him :  
“ Stranger, farewell—and at times, while happy and safe in thy homeland,  
Think upon me—since mostly to me thou owest thy safety.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Nausicaa, fair daughter of Alcinous great-hearted,  
So may omnipotent Zeus, loud-thundering husband of Hera,  
Grant me the day of return and to come back safe to my country,  
Then e'en there in my home will I offer thee prayers as a goddess  
All of the days of my life—for my life thou gavest me, maiden.”

These words spoken, he sank in a seat by the side of the monarch,  
While that the men were serving the portions and mixing the wine-bowls.  
Then drew nearer the herald conducting the sweet-voiced singer  
Demodocus, the revered, the belov'd of the people, and brought him  
Midst of the feasters, and close to a high roof-pillar he set him.  
Then to the herald addressed him aloud deep-plotting Odysseus,  
Showing a slice he had cut from a chine (still more was remaining),  
Flesh of a white-tusked boar, with the rich fat hanging around it :  
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"Take, O herald, and offer this meat as a mess to the minstrel,  
Demodocus. I will give him a greeting in spite of my sorrow ;  
Yea, for amongst all mortals that dwell on the earth is the singer  
Granted a guerdon of honour and reverence, since that he learneth  
All of his song from the Muse ; for she loveth the race of the poets."  
Thus did he speak to the herald, who bore the repast to the hero  
Demodocus. In his hands he received it rejoicing in spirit.

Now did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Calling to Demodocus thus spake deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Demodocus, far more than thy fellow-mortals I praise thee ;  
Surely the heavenly Muse was thy teacher, or even Apollo,  
Such is thy skill to relate all duly the fates of the Grecians,  
All of the feats they performed and all of the travail they suffered,  
Even as one who was present himself or had learnt from another.  
Come, pray, changing thy strain now sing of the horse that was builded,  
Fashioned of wood and devised by Epéus with help of Athene—  
How to the citadel's height it was brought by the godlike Odysseus  
Craftily, filled with the fighters who plundered the town of the Trojans.  
Shouldst thou relate it aright and tell all duly the story,  
Then shall I never be weary proclaiming to every mortal  
How by the favour of heaven divine is the skill of thy singing."

Moved by the words, and impelled by the god to exhibit his singing,  
Thence he began how some on the well-benched vessels embarking  
Put from the shore, where flame they had hurled in the huts of encampment—  
Some of the Greeks—but the others already with noble Odysseus  
Sat concealed in the horse in the market-square of the Trojans ;  
Yea, it was Trojans themselves who aloft to the citadel hauled it.  
There did it stand mid a babel of people confusedly talking,  
Sitting around ; and in three was the vote of the council divided,  
Either to smite and to shatter the bulk with the pitiless broad-axe,  
Or to a height to uphaul it and over the precipice hurl it,  
Or to permit it to stand as a gift to the gods and atonement.  
Thus too ended the matter at last, as to end it was fated,  
Seeing that doomed was the city to perish as soon as her ramparts  
Closed on the horse, that monster of wood, where lurked of the Argives  
All of the bravest, to bring on the Trojans bloodshed and ruin.  
Then did he sing of the sack of the town by the sons of Achaea,  
How from the horse outpouring and leaving the lair of the ambush

Hither and thither they scattered, the steep-built city to ravage ;  
 Sang of Odysseus too, how unto the house of the hero  
 Deiphobus like Ares he went with divine Menelaus.  
 Here did Odysseus (so sang he) adventure a terrible conflict,  
 Ay and prevailed in the end by the grace of Athena the dauntless.

Such was the story he sang, this singer renowned ; and Odysseus  
 Melted in tears and the great drops fell on his cheeks from his eyelids.  
 E'en as a woman with wailings her well-loved husband embraceth  
 Fallen in front of the city, in front of the host of the fighters,  
 Warding the pitiless day from his native town and his children ;  
 E'en as beholding him lying before her gasping and dying  
 Piercingly shrieking she claspeth his body—but foemen behind her  
 Smiting her oft with the shafts of their spears on the back and the shoulders  
 Drive her away as a slave and to slavery's toils and afflictions,  
 Where with her withering cheeks she in pitiful misery pineth—  
 So did the pitiful tears fall fast from the eyes of Odysseus.  
 Thus then weeping he sat and unnoted of all of the others,  
 All save Alcinous, who alone was aware and observed it,  
 Sitting anigh to his side ; and hearing him heavily groaning  
 Quickly he turned to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's princes :  
 " Harken, I pray, to my words, Phaeacian leaders and chieftains !  
 Time is for Demodocus from his clear-toned lute to refrain him,  
 Seeing that not to us all seems pleasing the song that he singeth.  
 Since our supper began and the godlike singer aroused him  
 Never as yet hath the stranger with pitiful grieving and groaning  
 Ceased to lament. Sore sorrow, I ween, investeth his spirit.  
 Bid him refrain from his song. Let us all make merry together,  
 Whether as guest or as host—for certainly thus it is better.  
 Yea, it is even because we revere him as guest that we granted  
 Escort safe to his home and the gifts that we gave him in friendship.  
 Ever indeed is a guest and a suppliant held as a brother  
 E'en by the mortal that only a few with his sympathy reacheth.  
 Therefore attempt not, stranger, to hide with a crafty invention  
 What I shall ask thee to tell ; more seemly it were to relate it.  
 Tell me the name that thou bearest at home with thy mother and father,  
 Ay and with others who dwell in thy town and the neighbouring country.  
 Never is any on earth to be found that is utterly nameless,  
 Whether for evil or good he is come to the land of the living ;  
 Every child at his birth hath a name bestowed by his parents.  
 Tell to me also the name of thy land and thy people and city,



Then will the vessels, prepared in their minds, know where to convey thee,  
Since Phaeacian ships need never a pilot to steer them,  
Neither a rudder at all, as is wont with the vessels of others.  
Straightway known to the ship is her master's thought and intention ;  
Known to her too are the cities and fertile lands of the nations,  
All of them—thus right swiftly they traverse the gulf of the ocean  
Shrouded from sight in a cloud and a darkness, and never upon them  
Resteth a dread to be harmed by the storm or to perish in shipwreck.  
Once howbeit it happed that I heard what my father related,  
Nausithous, who was wont to assert that Poseidon was angered,  
Jealous because we afforded infallible escort to all men.  
'Some day' (so did he speak) 'as a fine Phaeacian vessel  
Over the mist-bound deep from a convoy returns shall the sea-god  
Smite her to pieces and whelm with the mass of a mountain the city.'  
Such was the rede of my sire ; and the god peradventure will do so,  
Or he will never perform it, as seemeth the best to his spirit.  
Come now, tell me a thing that I ask thee, and clearly explain it :  
Where did thy wanderings lead thee ? to what strange races and regions ?  
Tell us to what far peoples and fair-built cities thou camest,  
Whether to savages wanton and wild and despisers of justice,  
Or to the lovers of strangers with hearts that revere the immortals.  
Say too, why dost thou weep and lament in thy spirit within thee,  
Hearing of Trojans and Greeks and the fate of the Ilian city ?  
This was the work of the gods ; such doom did they spin, and destruction  
Bring on the men, that it aye shall remain as a song for the singer.  
Perished perchance some kinsman of thine 'neath Ilian ramparts,  
Good-man true of a daughter, or father or brother by marriage,  
Such as a man holds, next to his blood, as the nearest and dearest ?  
Was't peradventure a friend well skilled in the things that delight thee,  
Comrade trusty and brave ? Since nowise less than a brother  
Proveth the man who as friend is endowed with a soul of discretion."

*Odyssey,*

*Book*

*Book*





# ODYSSEY BOOK IX

**H**IM then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
Truly a thing right pleasant it seemeth to list to a minstrel  
Such as this singer of thine, for in voice he is like an immortal.  
Nay, for myself, I avow there is nought more perfect and gracious  
Than when the heart of a people o'erfloweth with mirth and with gladness,  
While at the feast in the palace they list to the voice of a singer,  
Sitting the one by the other before full banqueting-tables  
Laden with bread and with flesh; and drawing the wine from the wine-bowl  
Beareth the steward around to the guests and filleth the goblets:  
This to my mind is the thing on the earth which seemeth the fairest.  
But—for thy spirit inclineth to learn of my grievous afflictions—  
All will I tell, though more I shall suffer and grieve in the telling.  
What then first shall I tell thee of all, what lastly relate thee,  
Since full many a woe have sent me the gods of Olympus?  
Well then, firstly my name will I utter, in order that ye too  
Learn it, and, should I escape from the pitiless day of destruction,  
Still your friend I shall ever remain, though far is my homeland.  
I am Odysseus, the son of Laertes, to every mortal  
Known for my manifold craft; and the fame of it reacheth to heaven.  
Ithaca, isle far-seen, is my home; therein is a mountain  
Neriton, waving with woods, conspicuous; islands around it  
Lie full many and closely adjacent the one to the other,  
Samos and Dulichium and the woodland heights of Zacynthus.  
Lowly doth Ithaca lie and is highest out in the ocean,  
Far in the western gloom—but the rest t'ward dawn and the sunrise;  
Rough—but for youths 'tis an excellent nurse; nor truly, meseemeth,  
Sweeter is aught on the earth for a man to behold than his homeland.  
Verily fain had retained me the beautiful goddess Calypso  
There in her hollow caves in her longing to make me her husband;  
Yea and in selfsame wise in her palace did Circe withhold me,  
Crafty enchantress of Aea, in longing to make me her husband;  
Yet did they never persuade me nor soften the heart in my bosom;  
So is it true that on earth there's sweeter than country and parents  
Nought to be found—nay, e'en if afar in a right fat homestead  
Distant from parents aloof one lives in a country of strangers.  
Come now—all of the tale of that doleful return I will tell thee,  
All that I suffered of Zeus when I sailed from the land of the Trojans.

Wafted by winds from the Troad we reached a Ciconian city,  
Ismarus. Here did I plunder the town and harried the people.  
Carrying then from the city the women and plentiful substance,  
All we divided, that none might lack fair share in the booty.  
Then did I order my men with a foot right nimble retreating  
Quickly to flee; but, alas, in their infinite folly they would not;  
Nay, strong wine in abundance they set them a-drinking and slaughtered  
Many a sheep on the shore and shambling crook-horned cattle.  
Meantime hasting away the Ciconians called to their fellows,  
Neighbours of theirs and withal far greater in number and braver,  
Mainland dwellers, and skilful as fighters from horses or war-cars  
Battle to wage with a foe, or on foot, should danger demand it.  
These came thronging as thickly as leaves and flowers in spring-time,  
Early at dawn, and a doom right evil from heaven was sent us,  
Hapless men that we were; and a great disaster we suffered.  
Setting ourselves in array by the swift-winged ships we contended,  
Hurling the one at the other with spears keen-bladed and bronzen.  
Now while new was the day and the sacred light was increasing  
Steadily standing we warded them off, though greater in number,  
Till, when the sun passed o'er to the time of the loosing of oxen,  
Then the Ciconians driving them back o'ermastered the Grecians.  
Six of the well-greaved fighters belonging to every vessel  
Perished, and all of the rest took flight and escaped from destruction.  
Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,  
Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades;  
Neither in sooth did I lead with the twy-beaked ships to the open  
Ere three times we had called on the souls of the pitiful comrades  
Fallen in fight on the field, by Ciconian foes overmastered.

Now on the vessels was sent by the Father who gathers the tempests  
Boreas, rushing with terrible blasts; and covered with cloud-rack  
Earth was at once and the sea; and down from the sky fell midnight.  
Headlong a squall swept onward the ships. Of a sudden the sails split,  
Sundered in three and in four by the furious might of the storm-blast.  
These forthwith did we lower and stow, foreboding destruction.  
Hastily then with the oars our vessels we urged to the mainland.  
Here two days and two nights we remained unceasingly watching,  
Ever in grief and exhaustion consuming the spirit within us,  
Till, when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed Morning,  
Then we uplifted the masts and with white sails spread to the breezes  
Sat, as the vessel was kept to her course by the wind and the steersman.

Verily now I had come unscathed to the land of my fathers,  
Had not the stream of the sea and the roll as I rounded Malea  
Carried me, under the stress of the Boreas, south of Cythera.

*Odyssey*  
18  
lines 401-411

Hence nine days was I borne by the ruinous blasts of the storm-winds  
Over the teeming deep. On the tenth we arrived at the mainland,  
Land of the Lotus-eaters, whose food is the fruit of a flower.  
Here on the shore disembarking we drew from a fountain of water.  
Hastily then did my mates make midday meal by the vessels.  
Now when of meat and of drink we had all of us fully partaken,  
Then of my men did I send forth certain to go and assure them  
What was this people, of all bread-nourished races of mortals.  
Two of my men did I choose, and a third as a herald I added.  
These then, swiftly departing, discovered the Eaters of Lotus ;  
Nor did the Lotus-eaters devise for my comrades destruction ;  
Nothing they did save only they gave them to eat of the lotus.  
Now whoever did eat of the fruit honey-sweet of the lotus  
Felt no longer the wish to return nor tidings to carry,  
Caring for nought but to stay with the Lotus-eaters for ever,  
Feeding on lotus, forgetting his home and the land of his fathers.  
These, though bitterly weeping, I brought to the ships by compulsion,  
Bound them, and under the thwarts in the hollow vessel I thrust them.  
Urgently then did I call on the rest of my trusty companions,  
Hasting as much as they might, on the swift-winged ships to embark them,  
Lest still more might eat of the fruit and forget their homeland.  
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches  
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.

Onward voyaging hence, our hearts o'erwhelmed with affliction,  
Unto the land of the Cyclops, a race overbearing and lawless,  
Soon we arrived. Here, trusting the favour of powers immortal,  
None with his hands e'er planteth a plant or tills with the ploughshare,  
Yet untilled and unplanted, behold, all groweth in plenty,  
Wheat and barley and vine ; and the vine's luxuriant clusters  
Bear rich juice of the grape that the rain of the heaven doth nourish.  
Neither assemblies for counsel they have nor laws and traditions ;  
Dwelling apart on the crests of the highest mountains the Cyclops  
Hollow caverns inhabit, and each gives law to his household,  
Children and wives ; nor care they at all each one for the other.

Nigh to the land of the Cyclops a rich-soiled island is lying

*Odyssey* Stretching in front of a harbour—not near nor yet very distant—  
ix Covered with forest ; and goats with a numberless progeny breed there,  
112-116 Wandering wild, by the tread of a human foot unaffrighted.  
Never is entered the island by hunters who hunt in the greenwood,  
Suffering many a toil as they harry the heights of the mountains ;  
Nor is it held as a meadow for flocks or as tilth for a corn-land ;  
All untilled and unplanted it lieth, for ever and alway  
Widowed of men ; but to bleating goats it affordeth a pasture.  
Vessel is none whose red bow plougheth the sea for the Cyclops,  
Nor to be found in the land are builders to toil and to fashion  
Well-decked vessels, to traverse the sea and all to accomplish,  
Visiting cities of mortals (as oft-times truly it happens  
Men cross over the ocean in ships each other to visit) ;  
Else maybe they had laboured the soil and had settled the island,  
Since not barren it seems, and all 'twould bear in the season.  
Meads are there close-skirting the grey-green brine of the ocean,  
Flooded with water and soft ; and the vine would flourish unrotting ;  
Smooth and stoneless the tillage, and deep is the crop that the reaper  
Ever in season can reap, for below right rich is the bottom.  
Here is a haven secure where never is needful a mooring,  
Neither the anchor to cast, nor e'en stern-cables to fasten ;  
Beaching the ship one waiteth awhile, till the heart of the sailor  
Stirreth within him to go, and a favouring breeze is arising.  
Now at the head of the harbour a freshet of glittering water  
Floweth from under a cavern, with poplars growing around it.  
Here did we first reach land, and a deity guided us surely  
Thorough the thick dark night, where all was invisible round us,  
Such was the deepness of mist that enveloped the ships, and above us  
Shone from the heav'n no light of the moon, for in clouds she was hidden.  
Thus did it happen that none of the watch was aware of the island ;  
Nor that the league-long waves went thundering on to the mainland  
Saw we until on the isle our well-decked ships we had stranded.  
Then, when at last we had beached them and every canvas was lowered,  
Out of the vessels we stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean,  
Laid us to sleep, and awaited the sacred light of the morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Saw we with wonder the island, and questing around it we wandered.  
Then did the Oreads, daughters of Zeus who beareth the aegis,  
Startle the goats of the crags, to provide a repast for my comrades.  
Quickly on well-bent bows and long-shanked javelins seizing

Hurried we forth of the ships, and in three our company ranging  
Shot ; and at once vouchsafed us a god right plentiful booty.  
Now was the number of vessels that followed me twelve, and to each one  
Fell nine goats as a portion, and ten for myself they selected.  
So for the whole of the day till the sun sank down in the ocean  
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,  
Since not yet was the good red wine consumed in the vessels,  
Some was remaining, for many a jar each crew of my shipmates  
Filled for themselves when we plundered the sacred Ciconian city.  
Then did we turn our gaze to the neighbouring land of the Cyclops,  
Noting the smoke and the bleating of sheep and of goats in the distance,  
Till, when the sun went down and come was the gloom of the twilight,  
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Calling together a council of all, these words I addressed them :  
' Here all others I wish to remain, O trusty companions,  
Waiting awhile till alone with my ship and the crew of my shipmates  
Trial I make what manner of mortals inhabit the country,  
Whether a folk that is wanton and wild, despisers of justice,  
Or with a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals.'

Thus did I speak, and I mounted aboard, and I bade my companions  
Likewise mounting the vessel to loose from the mooring the cable.  
These then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches  
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.  
Now when at last we arrived at the land—for it lieth not distant—  
There on the margin we noted a cavern anigh to the water  
Lofty and shaded with laurel, wherein were wont to repose them  
Flocks right many of sheep and of goats, and around it a courtyard,  
Lofty and builded of boulders enormous and deeply embedded,  
Woven with tall-stemmed pines and with trunks of the high-branched oak-trees.  
Here was the nightly resort of a human monster, who alway  
Lonely abode and pastured his flocks, nor was ever with others  
Wont to frequent, but apart aye brooded on impious horrors.  
Yea and a monstrous marvel was he—not fashioned in seeming  
Like to a mortal that liveth on bread but the peak of a mountain  
Covered with forests and standing alone, o'ertopping the others.

Now straightway I commanded the rest of my trusty companions  
There to remain by the ship and keeping them close to defend her,  
Then of the crew of my vessel selecting a dozen, the bravest,

Started ; and sweet dark wine in a goatskin bottle we carried.

This was a wine once given by Maro, son of Euanthes,

Priest of Apollo, the god who the city of Ismarus guardeth.

Us did he give it, for him and his wife and his child we protected,

Sparing with reverence, since in a dense dark grove was his dwelling

Holy to Phoebus Apollo ; and gifts right splendid he gave me :

Talents seven he gave me of gold well wrought in the furnace ;

Gave me a mixing-bowl all solid of silver, and lastly

Wine did he give us, decanting it off in a dozen of wine-jars,

Sweet, unmingled, a potion divine ; nor knew of it any,

None of the thralls in his house, nor even a woman attendant—

None but himself and his consort dear and the dame of his household.

Now when it happed that they drank of this red wine sweet as the honey,

Filling a cup, therewith did he mix full measures of water

Twenty, and out of the bowl came floating an odour of sweetness

Marvellous. Verily then to refuse it was nowise a pleasure.

This was the wine that I bare in a great skin bottle, and viands

Stored in a pouch ; for at once in my valiant heart I had boded

Here to encounter a man with a power gigantic invested,

Savage and knowing aright no customs of law and of justice.

Speedily then we arrived at the cave, but within it was no one ;

Gone was the monster to shepherd and batten his flocks on the pasture.

Entering therefore with wondering gaze all things we examined.

Baskets laden with cheeses we found, and penned in the sheepfolds

Lambs were thronging and kids ; each flock was distinct from the others ;

Firstlings folded apart, and apart were lambs of the summer,

Lambkins apart ; and with whey o'erflowing was every vessel,

Buckets and bowls well fashioned of wood, that he used for the milking.

Then did my comrades entreat me, exhorting and bidding me firstly

Taking a spoil of the cheeses to go—then later returning,

Speedily loosing the kids and the lambkins from out of the sheepfolds,

Unto the vessel to drive them and launch forth over the ocean.

Them unheeding I heard (far better had been had I heeded),

Wishing the man to behold and to claim me a gift as a guest-friend.

Ah but he gave to my men when he came no loving reception !

Then did we kindle a fire and offerings make and unbidden

Take of the cheeses and eat ; and we sat us adown in the cavern

Waiting—till . . . lo ! he appeared with his flock, and a burden enormous

Bare he of wood well-seasoned, to serve him for making his supper.



This at the mouth of the cavern he cast with a crash and a clatter,  
While in a panic we rushed to the innermost end of the cavern.  
Then of his fat-fed flock to the spacious grotto admitting  
Such as he milked (but the others he left outside of the doorway,  
Males of the sheep and the goats, in the high-walled court of the cavern),  
Lifting a monstrous rock in the doorway he set it as door-stone,  
Ponderous, such that of wagons not two and twenty together  
Goodly and strong, four-wheeled, could heave it away from the threshold;  
Such a precipitous mountain of rock did he set in the doorway.  
Then by the bleating goats and the ewes down-sitting, he milked them,  
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.  
Then straightway of the white warm milk one half did he curdle,  
Gathered it all to a mass, and in baskets of wicker he stored it;  
Half of it set he in vessels to stand, for it aye to be handy  
Either to take and to drink or to serve him for making his supper.  
Now when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,  
Then did he kindle the fire—and straight he espied and addressed us:  
‘Ha! Who are ye, good friends? Whence sail ye the paths of the waters?  
Come ye to chaffer for gain, or recklessly roaming at random,  
Like to the robbers and rovers who wander and rob on the ocean,  
Setting their lives on the hazard in bringing disaster on others?’  
Thus did he speak, and at once our hearts were broken within us,  
Smitten with fear at the deep dread voice and the form of the monster.  
Yet e’en then did I find me a word to address him in answer:  
‘Men of Achaea, who wandering come from the land of the Trojans,  
Driven by many a storm on the boundless gulf of the ocean.  
Steering for home we had sailed, but by ways far other and courses  
Hither arrived; and Zeus, I believe, thus willed to devise it.  
Men of the host we avow us of King Agamemnon Atrides,  
Whose fame verily now is the greatest under the heaven,  
Such was the city he sacked; and he smote full many a people.  
Lo, now! brought to thy knees by misfortune we humbly entreat thee,  
Whether a guest-friend’s gift thou’rt willing to give, or another  
Present to grant us—as aye to expect is the right of a stranger.  
Fear, brave Sir, the immortals! As suppliants, lo, we entreat thee.  
Ay, it is Zeus that the guest and the suppliant ever avengeth;  
He is the god of the stranger and nigh to the one that he pities.’  
Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart he addressed me in answer:  
‘Either a fool, O stranger, thou seem’st or art come from a distance,  
Seeing thou biddest me fear the immortals and shun to offend them.  
Little the Cyclops careth for Zeus who beareth the aegis,

Or for the blessed immortals—for we are greatly the stronger ;  
Neither in awe of the anger of Zeus would ever I spare thee,  
Thee or thy mates, were not in my bosom my spirit to bid me.  
Say now where at thy coming thy well-built vessel was lying !  
Lies it on some far foreland, or near ? Come, speak, and inform me !'  
Thus did he tempt me to speak, but I knew too much to be cheated ;  
Answering therefore in turn with a story of guile I addressed him :  
'Touching my ship—it was broke by the King Earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Shattered to pieces on rocks in the uttermost bounds of thy country,  
Cast on a cape by the wind from the open expanse of the ocean.  
Then I escaped, with the men thou beholdest, from utter destruction.'

Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart, and answering nothing,  
Suddenly making a spring, out-darting his hands on my comrades,  
Two in his clutches he seized and as whelps on the floor of the cavern  
Dashed—and the brains flowed forth on the floor and the earth was bespattered.  
Cutting them member from member he straight made ready his supper ;  
Then as a mountain lion he ate, not leaving a morsel,  
All the intestines, all of the flesh and the bones with the marrow.  
Meantime weeping to Zeus we upraised our hands in entreaty,  
Seeing the terrible deed ; and helpless terror possessed us.  
Now when at last he had glutted his monstrous maw to repletion,  
Feasting on human flesh and the raw milk drinking thereafter,  
Stretching him out in the midst of the flocks he reclined in the cavern.  
Then did I seek for advice from the valiant spirit within me,  
Whether to steal me anigh, and, my sharp sword drawn from the scabbard,  
Into his body to smite, where midriff toucheth the liver,  
Groping to find me the spot. But I thought once more and restrained me :  
Here in the cave we too must perish in utter destruction,  
Seeing we ne'er had the strength from the spacious vault of the doorway  
Pushing amain to remove the enormous stone he had set there.  
Therefore with many a moan we awaited the sacred morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Then did he kindle anew and his fine flocks draw to the milking,  
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.  
Then, when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,  
Seizing again two men in his clutch he prepared them for dinner.  
After his dinner he hurried his fat-fed flocks from the cavern,  
Easily lifting aside the enormous rock ; and he set it  
Back in the door as a man might place on a quiver the cover.

Then with a whoop and a whistle he hurried his flock to the mountain,  
Leaving me there devising him ills in the depths of my bosom,  
Hoping to gain me revenge and renown by the help of Athene.

*Odyssey*

*ix*

*11*

This now seemed to my mind to be counsel the best and the wisest.  
Lying anigh to the fold was a monstrous club of the Cyclops,  
Yet unseasoned, of olive, the which he had hewn him to carry  
After 'twas dry ; and we deemed it as huge as the mast of a vessel,  
E'en of a great black vessel of twice ten rowers the mainmast,  
Yea, of a broad-beamed trader that crosses the gulf of the ocean ;  
Such was the length of the club to behold, and such was the thickness.  
Creeping anigh it I severed so much as the reach of a fathom,  
Handed it o'er to my mates and ordered them taper and plane it.  
These then tapered it even, and standing before it I shaved it  
Sharp to a point, then charring it quick in the glow of the embers  
Stowed it for safety away in the sheep-dung carefully hidden,  
Masses of which were lying around in the depths of the cavern.  
Then I commanded my comrades to settle by lot and determine  
Who with myself should venture the spar to uplift and to twirl it  
Round in the Cyclops' eye while slumber sweet was upon him.  
Chosen by lot were just those men I had willingly chosen,  
Four of my fellows, and I as the fifth to the number was added.

Now in the even, arrived with his fair-fleeced flocks from the pasture,  
Into the spacious cavern the fat-fed beasts he admitted,  
All of them ; none did he leave outside in the high-walled courtyard,  
Boding of ill—or perchance some deity bade him to do so.  
Next he uplifted the boulder enormous and set it as door-stone.  
Then by the bleating goats and the ewes down-sitting he milked them,  
All of them duly in turn, and he put to the mothers the lamblings.  
So, when awhile he had busied himself and had finished his labours,  
Seizing again two men in his clutch he prepared them for supper.  
Forthwith venturing nigh to the Cyclops thus I addressed him,  
Holding between both hands dark wine in a mazer of ivy :  
'Cyclops, drink of the wine—since done is thy cannibal banquet.  
Take it and see what manner of drink I had stowed in my vessel.  
Lo, as an offering this was I bringing thee, hoping for pity,  
Hoping for homeward return ; but thy rage exceedeth endurance.  
Pitiless being !—and how might ever another approach thee,  
Any of all mankind ?—for thy deeds are verily lawless.'  
Thus did I speak, and he took it and drank, and a wonderful pleasure

Felt he in draining the luscious draught ; and he asked for another :  
' Give me again, an thou wilt ! and tell me thy name right quickly,  
Now straightway ! Thou'lt get thee a stranger's gift to delight thee.  
Here too beareth the earth, rich giver of grain, for the Cyclops  
Juice of the clustering grapes that the rain of the heaven doth nourish ;  
Ah but a wine like this is a draught of ambrosial nectar !'  
Thus did he speak, and again of the fiery liquor I gave him ;  
Thrice did I bring it and give it, and thrice in his folly he drained it.  
Now when I saw that the wine was invading the wits of the Cyclops,  
Speaking with words right gentle and winning again I addressed him :  
' Cyclops—lo, thou demandest my name. Well, listen ! for plainly  
Now will I tell it. So give me thy promise, the gift of a stranger !  
Nobody—that is my name, and nothing but Nobody call me  
Mother and father and all of the rest of my fellows and comrades.'  
Thus did I speak, but with pitiless heart he addressed me in answer :  
' Nobody then I shall eat when I've eaten his fellows and comrades—  
All of the others before him ; and that is my gift to the stranger.'

Speaking, he downward sank and fell on his back, and he lay there  
Bending his monstrous neck to the side, o'ermastered by slumber,  
Slumber that mastereth all ; and out of his gullet there issued  
Wine and the gobbets of human flesh ; and he retched as a drunkard.  
Then did I thrust me the stake in the midst of the embers to make it  
Fiery hot, and with comforting words I addressed my companions,  
Giving them courage lest any in fear might fail and desert me.  
So, when at last that stake sharp-pointed of olive was almost  
Bursting to flame, though green was the wood, and was terribly glowing,  
Then did I fetch it anigh from the fire, and around it my comrades  
Posted themselves, and courage immense some deity gave us.  
Seizing the stake all glowing and sharp at the point, with a strong thrust  
Into the eye full deeply they drove it ; and I at the top end  
Twisted it round, as a man that is boring the beam of a vessel  
Bores with an auger, and others below with the leather revolve it,  
Holding by both ends fast, as the auger is ceaselessly spinning.  
Thus in his eye did we bore, and the stake sharp-pointed and glowing  
Twisted about, red-hot ; and the blood ran spluttering round it.  
Then did the breath of the flame scorch all of his eyelid and eyebrow,  
While consumed was the ball of the eye, and the roots of it crackled.  
E'en as a worker of metal who fashions an adze or a hatchet  
Dips it aglow in the water to chill it, and fiercely it hisseth  
(Thus it is tempered, and thus there cometh a strength to the iron),

So did his eyeball hiss at the fiery stake as it entered.  
Then with a loud and a terrible yelling the cavern re-echoed,  
While in a panic we fled ; and seizing the stake did the Cyclops,  
Drawing it out of his eye with the blood all smeared and bedabbled,  
Hurl it amain and afar with his hands, as if maddened by anguish.

Then with his monstrous voice did he call to his fellows, the Cyclops  
Dwelling in caverns around on the wind-swept heights of the mountain.  
These then, hearing the cry, came flocking from this and from that side,  
Gathering nigh to the cavern and asking what was the trouble :  
'What is it troubles thee, O Polyphemos, that thus thou art calling  
Through the ambrosial silence of night, and making us sleepless ?  
No one surely of mortals is trying of flocks to despoil thee ?  
No one surely by force or by cunning is trying to kill thee ?'  
Forthwith out of the cavern addressed them the huge Polyphemos :  
'Friends, it is Nobody trying by craft, not force, to destroy me.'  
Then did they answer and speak, and swift-winged words they addressed him :  
'Seeing that nobody trieth to harm thee, nor comes to disturb thee,  
Sickness none can avoid—that cometh from Zeus the Almighty.  
Nay now, offer a prayer to thy sire, Earth-shaking Poseidon !'  
Spake it, and went ; and the heart in my bosom was shaken with laughter,  
So had the Nobody name of my faultless cunning deceived them.

Groaning and travailing sore in his agony then did the Cyclops  
Grove with his hands all round and lifting the stone from the portal  
Seat him adown by the door with his hands outspread in the doorway,  
Any to catch who was issuing forth with the sheep from the cavern ;  
Such was the witless fool that, I ween, he expected to find me.  
Then I revolved in my mind what best to devise, and bethought me  
Whether a way of escaping from death for myself and my comrades  
Were to be found ; and I wove all manner of schemes and devices,  
E'en as a man for his life ; for a terrible danger was nigh us.  
This now unto my mind of devices appeared to be wisest :  
Rams with the sheep there were, well nurtured, heavily coated,  
Beautiful beasts and great, and with fleeces violet-coloured.  
Quietly these did I fasten with withes that I twisted together  
(Bedding whereon he had slept, that impious monster, the Cyclops),  
Taking them three and three—for a man to be borne by the midmost,  
Each of the others on each of the sides protecting my comrades.  
Thus three sheep bare each of my mates—and then for my own self  
There was a ram that of all of the flock was the greatest and finest ;

Him did I seize by the back and under the thick-fleeced stomach  
Curled me and lay, and my hands in the shags of the wonderful sheep-wool  
Tightly I twisted, and thus with a heart courageous I hung there.  
So then uttering moans we awaited the sacred morning.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Then did the males of the flock haste eagerly forth to the pasture,  
While un milked went bleating the mothers around in the sheepfolds,  
Udders a-bursting. But he, their lord, in his terrible anguish  
Travailing still, groped over the backs of the rams, as before him  
Halting in turn each stood ; nor, fool that he was, did he notice  
How right under the breasts of the shag-fleeced sheep I had bound them.  
Last of the flock came slowly the ram, and he paced to the doorway  
Cumbered with all of his wool and weighted with me and my cunning.  
Him too handled and thus accosted the huge Polyphemus :  
' What is the reason, my pet, thou art issuing forth from the cavern  
Last of the flock ? Not ever before wast led by the others,  
Nay but afar in the front didst graze fresh blooms of the meadows  
Mightily striding, and first didst come to the streams of the rivers ;  
First too ever 'tis thou who at eveningtide to the homestead  
Longst to return—while now thou art last ! Ay surely thou grieve'st,  
Mourning the eye of thy lord, that an impious mortal hath blinded,  
He and his fellows accurséd, my wits with his wine overcoming—  
Nobody . . . Ah but I deem he is not yet safe from destruction !  
Verily hadst thou but feeling as I and the power of speaking,  
So as to tell me the place where shunning my wrath he is skulking,  
Then all over the cavern his brains were this way and that way  
Dashed on the ground as I crushed him to death, and happy my heart were,  
Lightened of all of the woe that a worthless Nobody brought me.'  
Thus then speaking, the ram he released, and it passed from the doorway.  
Now when a little away we had got from the cavern and courtyard,  
First from the ram I unfastened myself, then loosed my companions.  
Hastily then those sheep high-stepping and rich in their fatness,  
Ofttimes turning to look, did we drive, till at last to the vessel  
Safe we arrived ; and welcome we came to the rest of my comrades,  
We who from death had escaped. For the others they fain had lamented ;  
Yet I forbade it, and frowning and nodding in silence I bade them  
Not to lament, but the fair-fleeced sheep, right many in number,  
Hurriedly casting aboard launch forth on the salt sea water.  
Speedily then they embarked and taking their seats on the benches  
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.





ODYSSEUS AND THE CYCLOPS





Now when as far I was come as the voice of a shouter will carry,  
Then to the Cyclops I called and with words of derision addressed him:  
‘Cyclops! wert not fated, it seems, those mates of a weakling  
There in thy hollow cavern to eat, thou insatiable monster!  
Nay, much rather ’tis thou wert fated to light on misfortune,  
Pitiless one, ay truly and shameless, the guests in thy homestead  
E’en to devour! Lo, Zeus and the other immortals avenged it!’  
So I did speak. Thereat, with a heart more maddened to fury,  
Breaking a peak clean off from a huge high mountain, he hurled it.  
Down on the water it fell to the front of the blue-prowed vessel,  
Just to the fore, and it missed by a little the end of the rudder.  
High upheaved was the sea when the crag descended upon it;  
Backward the vessel was borne, for the swirl of the roller returning  
Swept to the shore as a surge of the ocean and lifted it landward.  
Then on a long punt-pole did I seize, and strongly I thrust her  
Off from the shore and exhorted and urgently bade my companions  
Lay them with might on the oar and gain them escape from destruction,  
Nodding command. Then forward they bent, all hastily rowing.

Soon now over the brine we had traversed double the distance.  
Then to the Cyclops anew I had willingly called, but my comrades,  
One and the other, with words of entreaty restraining addressed me:  
‘Madman! wherefore arouse this terrible being to fury?  
Even already the bolt that he seaward hurled hath the vessel  
Drifted again to the shore, where truly we thought we had perished.  
Ay and had any but uttered a word or a sound—had he heard it—  
Straight he had shattered the heads of us all and the beams of the vessel,  
Hurling a huge jagged block—such monstrous missiles he launches.’  
Thus did they speak; but they pleaded in vain to my valiant spirit,  
Since once more with a heart all flaming in wrath I addressed him:  
‘Cyclops, listen! If ever it happen that any of mortals  
Wishes to learn of the cause of thine eye’s disfiguring blindness,  
Say that Odysseus, sacker of cities, was he that did blind thee,  
Son of Laertes and having his dwelling in Ithaca’s island.’  
So did I speak—whereat with a groan he addressed me in answer:  
‘Ah! Ah! Surely the doom predestined is falling upon me!  
Here in the land was a prophet of old both holy and famous,  
Telemus Eurymidés, who in augury ever unrivalled  
Plying the art of a seer waxed old in the land of the Cyclops.  
He was the man foretold me of yore this fate to befall me,  
How at Odysseus’ hands I was doomed to be reft of my eyesight.

Ay but a man right tall and goodly I ever awaited  
Some day hither to come, with a power gigantic invested.  
Now hath a dwarf-like creature, a worthless wight and a weakling,  
Robbed me of sight, with the fumes of his wine o'ercoming my senses.  
Well—come hither, Odysseus ! I'll give thee the gifts of a stranger,  
Ay and will speed thy return by the grace of the great Earth-shaker,  
Since that I boast me his son, and the god as my father avows him ;  
He too, should he but wish, could heal me—if never another  
Either of blessed immortals or earth-born men that be mortal.'  
So did he speak. Straightway then answering thus I addressed him :  
'Would to the gods that of life and of soul 'twere mine to bereave thee  
No less surely, and send thee below to the mansion of Hades,  
Than it is sure not even Poseidon shall heal thee of blindness.'  
Thus did I speak ; whereat to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon  
Praying he stretched both hands to the starry expanse of the heaven :  
'Hear me, caerulean-tressed Earth-girdler ! Hear me, Poseidon !  
Am I thy son, and dost thou indeed as my father avow thee,  
Home let him never return, this sacker of cities, Odysseus,  
Son of Laertes and having his dwelling in Ithaca's island !  
Or, if indeed he is fated his friends to behold and in safety  
Win to his well-built home and arrive at the land of his fathers,  
Late and in pitiful plight, and with none of his comrades surviving,  
Borne on an alien ship let him come, and at home find sorrows !'  
So did he pray, and was heard by the god of caerulean tresses.

Then once more on a rock far greater he seized, and upraised it—  
Swung it around him and hurled—and a measureless might he exerted.  
Down on the water it fell to the rear of the blue-prowed vessel,  
Just to the stern, and it missed by a little the end of the rudder.  
High upheaved was the sea when the crag descended upon it ;  
Forward the vessel was borne by the billow and swept to the island.

Now when at last we arrived at the isle, where waiting the other  
Well-decked ships were ranged all closely together, and round them  
Sat lamenting the men, scarce more expecting to see us—  
Hither as soon as we came and the ship on the sands we had driven,  
Out of her all of us stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
Then from the hollow vessel unlading the flock of the Cyclops,  
All we divided, that none might lack fair share in the booty.  
Also to me was the ram by my well-greaved company given.  
Him, as a prize of the spoil, did I straight on the shore of the ocean

Offer to Zeus who dwells in the storm-clouds, Ruler of all things,  
Burning the flesh of the thighs—but in vain ; for he scorned the oblation,  
Pondering still in his mind how all might utterly perish,  
All of my well-decked vessels and all of my trusty companions.

So for the whole of the day till the sun went down in the ocean  
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.  
Then, when the sun sank down and came was the gloom of the twilight,  
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Then straightway I exhorted my fellows and urgently bade them  
Quickly embark on the vessels and loose from the moorings the cables.  
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches  
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.  
Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,  
Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades.



# ODYSSEY BOOK X

**N**OW did we come to the isle Aeolian, home of the monarch  
Aeolus, Hippotas' son, by the gods everlasting belovéd.  
This is an island that floats, and a rampart is builded about it  
Bronzen, unbroken ; and sheer from the water the precipice rises.  
Now to the monarch had been twelve children born in the palace,  
Six were daughters and six were sons in the bloom of their manhood.  
Therefore to each of the sons he had given a daughter in marriage.  
These in the halls of their father belovéd and excellent mother  
Ever do feast ; for at hand are ever unfailing provisions ;  
Filled is the house and the court with the odours and noises of feasting  
All of the day, but at night at the side of their honour'd consorts  
Covered with wrappers they slumber on bedsteads with beautiful carvings.  
Now when at last we arrived at the city and home of the monarch,  
One whole month he entreated me well, and of all he inquiréd,  
Troy and the Argive fleet and the homeward return of the Grecians.  
Then, when the whole of the story in order was duly related,  
I too uttered request concerning my journey, and begged him  
Speed my return, and he made not refusal, but furnished an escort,  
Playing me also the skin of a nine-year ox for a wallet,  
Where fast-bound he imprisoned the ways of the blustering storm-blasts,  
Seeing that him as the Keeper of winds hath elected Cronion,  
Either to lull them to rest or to raise whichever he listeth.  
This in my hollow ship with a cord resplendent of silver  
Firmly he bound, to allow not a breath to escape, not the faintest,  
Letting alone fare forth with its favouring breezes the Zephyr  
Homeward to carry the vessels and us ; yet fated he was not  
This to accomplish, because our own mad folly destroyed us.

Nine days long did we sail, and the nights no less than the daytime ;  
Till, on the tenth, in the even, we sighted the fields of the homeland,  
Ay and beheld quite near us the folk as they tended the beacons.  
Now sweet sleep came creeping upon me, outworn with my labours,  
Seeing that ever I managed the sheet and to none of my comrades  
Trusted it, hoping the quicker to come to the land of my fathers.  
Meanwhile thus did my mates hold converse one with another,  
Saying that home I was bringing a treasure of gold and of silver,  
Present by Hippotas' son, the munificent Aeolus, given :  
So did they secretly talk as they looked each man at his neighbour :

*(Odysseus)* 'Lo, how dear, how honoured this fellow is ever with all men,  
X Every mortal the land or the city of whom he arriveth !  
Many a treasure he bringeth from Troy, magnificent prizes  
Out of the booty ; but we, who the selfsame journey have ended,  
Homeward return nought having withal save hands that are empty.  
This too sure is a gift which lately hath lavished in friendship  
Aeolus. Come now, quick let us spy what is here and discover  
How great treasure of gold and of silver is stowed in the wallet.'  
Thus did they speak, and the men were won by the counsel of mischief.  
Loosing the bag they untied it—and out rushed every storm-wind,  
Seized them with might of a tempest and carried them suddenly seaward  
Wailing and weeping, afar from the land of their fathers ; whereat I  
Waked from my slumber, and straight with my spirit unerring I communed  
Whether to leap from the ship and to seek for my death in the waters  
Or to endure it in silence and still to remain with the living.  
Well—I endured and remained, and wrapt in my cloak on the vessel  
Lay, as the ships swept on, by the terrible blast of the storm-wind  
Back to the isle Aeolian borne, midst groans of my comrades.

Here on the shore disembarking we drew from a fountain of water ;  
Hastily then did my mates make midday meal by the vessels.  
Now when of meat and of drink we had all of us fully partaken,  
Then did I, taking as escort a herald and one of my shipmates,  
Go to the glorious palace, and here King Aeolus found I  
Feasting, and near him was seated his queen, and beside her the children.  
Entering therefore the house, on the threshold anigh to the door-posts  
Sat we adown, while all were filled with amazement, and asked me :  
'Why art thou hither returned ? What deity harmed thee, Odysseus ?  
Surely a speeding we gave thee enow, sufficing to bring thee  
Back to thy land and thy home, or whither thy soul desireth.'  
Thus did they speak ; whereat with a heart right heavy I answered :  
'Harmed have evil companions, and pitiless slumber hath harmed me,  
Woe to it !—Nay now, heal us, my friends, since yours is the power.'  
So did I speak, and besought them with gentlest words of persuasion ;  
Yet all silent they sat. Then answered the father in anger :  
'Hence from the Isle forthwith, most infamous mortal that liveth !  
Wicked I hold it to treat as a guest or to speed on his journey  
One whom thus pursueth the hate of the deities blessed.  
Hence and begone ! since hated of gods everlasting thou camest.'  
Spake—and away from his palace he ordered me grievously groaning.



Onward thence as we sailed, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,  
Spent was the soul of the men by the grievous labour of rowing.  
Ah, for that folly of ours ! for the vanished hope of the homeland !  
Six days long did we voyage, the nights no less than the daytime,  
Till, on the seventh, we came to the mountainous stronghold of Lamos,  
Laestrygonian Telepylos, where shepherd to shepherd  
Calls, as the one comes home with his flock and the other is starting.  
Here might twofold wages be won by a man that was sleepless,  
Once as a herd of the kine, once white flocks tending as shepherd,  
Such in the land is the nearness of night and of day in their courses.  
Now when at last we had come to the glorious haven—(around it  
Both to the right and the left is a cliff's precipitous rampart ;  
Two bluff headlands as well jut opposite one to the other  
Out to the mouth of the haven and make right narrow the entry)—  
Then brought all of the others within it their twy-beaked vessels.  
These inside of the bay of the hollow harbour they fastened  
One by the other—for never ariseth a billow within it,  
Great nor little, but round there spreadeth a radiant calmness—  
While for myself, I alone did my black ship moor on the outside,  
Right at the outermost point, to a rock fast binding the cable ;  
Then I upmounted the crags and stationed myself on an outlook.  
Nowhere either of oxen or men to be seen was the labour,  
Only a smoke I perceived from the inland flickering upward.  
So of my men did I send forth certain to go and assure them  
What was this people, of all bread-nourished races of mortals ;  
Two of my comrades I chose, and a third as a herald I added.  
These then landed and went by a road right level, that wagons  
Used when they brought to the city the wood from the heights of the mountains.  
Issuing forth of the city for water approached them a damsel,  
Laestrygonian Antiphates' gigantic daughter,  
Hither descending to draw from the source of a beautiful freset,  
Fount Artacia, whence to the city the water is carried.  
Now when anigh she had come they accosted and questioned her fully  
Who was the king of the country and what was the nation he governed.  
Then straightway did she point to the high-roofed house of her father.  
So to the glorious house of the monarch they came and the mother  
Found there, like to the peak of a hill ; and they sickened with horror.  
Then forthwith from the place of the council she summoned her husband,  
Antiphates ; and he plotted at once their cruel destruction.  
One of my men in his clutches he seized and prepared him for dinner,  
While that the twain sped swiftly away and escaped to the vessels.

Then in the city he raised an alarm, which hearing the mighty  
 Laestrygonians flocking collected from this and from that side,  
 Thousands and thousands, not like to an army of men but of Giants.  
 These then down from the headlands with boulders as big as a burden  
 Cast, and a pitiful din of a sudden arose in the vessels,  
 Crashing of shattered ships and shrieking of men in their anguish,  
 Whom like fishes they speared and bare to their horrible banquet.  
 Whilst such slaughter was done in the inner recess of the harbour,  
 Drawing the sharp-edged sword which hung at my thigh from its scabbard  
 Quickly I severed the cable that fastened my blue-bowed galley.  
 Hastily then I exhorted my fellows and urgently bade them  
 Lay them with might on the oar and win them escape from disaster.  
 Then did they tug uptossing the brine in their fear of destruction.  
 So right gladly from 'neath the precipitous cliffs to the open  
 Fluttered my ship ; but the rest, ay every vessel, had perished.  
 Onward thence did we sail, our hearts sore laden with sorrow,  
 Gladly escaping from death, yet mourning for much-loved comrades.

Then to the isle Aeaea we came, whereon had her dwelling  
 Circe of beautiful locks, dread goddess with voice as a mortal.  
 True-born sister is she to the baleful wizard Aeëtes.  
 Each was begotten of Eëlios who shineth on mortals,  
 Born of the selfsame mother, of Persé, daughter of Ocean.  
 Here to the shore of the island we brought our vessel in silence,  
 Into a sheltering bay, to the which some deity led us.  
 Then disembarking we lay two days and two nights on the dry land,  
 Ever in grief and exhaustion consuming the spirit within us,  
 Till when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed morning,  
 Taking my keen-edged sword and a lance, by myself I departed.  
 Hastily leaving the ship, to a height commanding I mounted,  
 Hoping to notice the labours of men or the sound of their voices.  
 Thus I upmounted the crags and stationed myself on an outlook,  
 Whence I had sight of a smoke mid the wide expanse of the landscape  
 Rising from Circe's hall, through dense oak-thickets and woodland.  
 Then long while did I ponder in mind and in spirit within me,  
 Whether to go and explore this fiery smoke I had sighted.  
 Thus as I pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better :  
 First to the swift-winged ship to return and the shore of the ocean,  
 Give to the men their meal, then send some forth on a questing.  
 Now when at last I was drawing anigh to the twy-beaked galley,  
 Then in my loneliness sure some god who had pity upon me



CIRCE AND THE COMRADES OF ODYSSEUS



Sent me a stag enormous, with antlers loftily branching,  
Right in my path, to the river descending from glades of the forest,  
Thirsting to drink ; for the might of the sun smote sorely upon him.  
While from the river he came, in the midst of his back by the backbone  
Smote him the blade of my lance, and it pierced right through to the belly ;  
Over he rolled in the dust with a scream, and fled was his spirit.  
Then on the body I planted a foot and the brass-bound spear-shaft  
Dragged from the wound, and down on the earth close by I reclined it.  
Here did I leave it, and gathered a number of withies and saplings.  
These to a rope of a fathom in length tight-twisted from both ends  
Plaiting, I fastened the feet of the monstrous creature together,  
Slung him across on the nape of my neck, then made for the vessel  
Leaning me hard on my spear, on the shoulder unable to bear him  
Grasped by the one hand only—for wondrous huge was the creature.  
Then to the fore of the vessel I cast him and roused my companions  
Standing in turn near each, and with words consoling addressed them :  
' Courage, my friends ! Not yet shall we go, though sorely afflicted,  
Down to the mansion of Death, till the destined day be arisen.  
Come ! while yet there is meat and is drink in the swift-winged vessel,  
Be not forgetful of food, nor pine thus famished for hunger.'  
Thus did I speak, and harking at once to my words of persuasion,  
Straight they unmuffled, and there on the shore of the waste salt water  
Marvelling gazed at the stag—so wondrous huge was the creature.  
Then, when at last they had sated their eyes with the pleasure of gazing,  
Washing their hands they began to prepare them a glorious banquet.  
So for the whole of the day till the sun went down in the ocean  
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.  
Then, when the sun sank down and came was the gloom of the twilight,  
Weary we laid us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Calling together a council of all, these words I addressed them :  
' List to my words, though fortune is verily evil, my comrades.  
Friends—no longer we know of the region of gloom or of dawning,  
Neither the place where setteth the sun which shineth on mortals,  
Nay nor where he ariseth ; and now let us quickly consider  
Whether remains aught else to devise. There's nought I can think of.  
All I beheld when I mounted the crags—for I came to an outlook.  
This is an isle, all round by the infinite ocean encircled.  
Lowly and flat is the island itself ; and a smoke in the middle  
Clearly I noticed arising in dense oak-thickets and woodlands.'

Thus did I speak, and the hearts of my mates were broken within them,  
Calling to mind those deeds of the Laestrygonian giant,  
Calling the fury to mind of the insolent cannibal Cyclops.  
Loudly lamenting they wept, and poured forth tears in abundance,  
Vainly—for nought was the profit they gained by their weeping and wailing.  
Then two parties I formed of the whole of my well-greaved comrades,  
Equally numbered, and leaders for both of the bands I selected,  
Godlike Eurylochus of the one and myself of the other.  
Then in a brass-bound helm when the lots were hastily shaken,  
First of the lots to outleap was of Eurylochus great-hearted.  
Thus then starting he went with his two and twenty companions  
Bitterly wailing; and us did they leave lamenting behind them.

Soon in the woodland glades they discovered the palace of Circe  
Built of stones smooth-cut, on a site with a beautiful prospect.  
Roaming around it at will were wolves of the mountain and lions.  
These had the goddess bewitched with her potions of evil enchantment.  
Nor did the beasts make rush at my comrades, but (verily 'twas so!)  
Fawning upon them they waved long tails and ramping upreared them,  
Even as dogs that encircle the master who comes from a banquet  
Fawning—for scraps to appease their ravening ever he bringeth—  
Thus came ramping around them the strong-clawed wolves and the lions  
Fawning, and frightened the men as they saw these terrible monsters.  
Now when at last they had come to the porch of the fair-tressed goddess,  
Circe they heard in the palace. With beautiful voice she was singing,  
Weaving a great and ambrosial web—such raiment as only  
Goddesses work, so delicate fine, so splendid and lovely.  
First then uttered a word Polites, leader of heroes,  
He that was dearest of all of my mates and trustiest also:  
'Listen, my friends! for within at a great loom plieth her shuttle,  
Singing with voice so sweet that it maketh the floor to re-echo,  
Either a goddess or woman. But come and at once let us call her!'  
Thus did he speak and at once all raised their voices and called her.  
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,  
Calling them in; and they all in their foolishness followed and entered,  
All save Eurylochus, for he tarried, suspicious of treason.  
Bringing them into her palace she set them on chairs and on couches,  
Mixed them of cheese and of meal and of yellow honey a batter  
Mingled with Pramnian wine, and noxious drugs of enchantment  
Added, that all might utterly fail to remember their homeland.  
Now so soon he had drained what she gave him, behold, of a sudden

Smiting the man with her wand she imprisoned him close in a pig-sty,  
Having already the head of a pig and the voice and the bristles,  
Ay and the body, but reason remaining unchanged as aforetime.  
Thus imprisoned in sties they made lamentation, and Circe  
Flung to them acorns and mast of the ilex and fruit of the cornel,  
Food that by wallowing swine is at all times greedily eaten.

Meantime Eurylochus came hurriedly back to the vessel,  
Tidings to bring of his mates and the shameful fate they had suffered.  
Yet not a word was he able to utter for all his endeavour,  
Pierced to the heart as he seemed by a speechless sorrow, his eyes too  
Flooded with tears, and his soul all eager for loud lamentation,  
Till at the last, when we all in amazement had urged him with questions,  
Thus did he speak, and related the doom of the rest of his comrades :  
'E'en as thou badest, we traversed the oak-lands, noble Odysseus,  
Till in the glades of the wood we discovered a fair-built mansion  
Built of stones smooth-cut, on a site with a beautiful prospect.  
Here in the palace was plying her shuttle and sweetly was singing  
Either a goddess or woman ; and raising their voices they called her.  
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,  
Calling them in ; and they all in their foolishness followed and entered,  
All but myself—for I tarried behind, suspicious of treason.  
Thus did they totally vanish away from my sight, nor did any  
Further appear, though long there seated I watched and I waited.'

Thus did he speak ; but a great sword, studded with silver and bronzen,  
Over my shoulder I hung, and my bow too slinging around me  
Back by the selfsame road I commanded my comrade to guide me ;  
Whereat clasping my knees with his hands he began to implore me,  
While with a woeful wail these swift-winged words he addressed me :  
'Take me not thither unwilling, my master, but leave me behind here !  
Well do I know thou'lt never return, nor canst thou another  
Bring of thy shipmates back. Nay rather, with these the survivors  
Haste we to flee, while still to escape is the day of destruction.'  
Thus did he speak in entreaty, and thus I addressed him in answer :  
'Eurylochus—concerning thyself—stay here if thou wishest,  
Eating and drinking thy fill by the side of the blue-prow'd vessel !  
But—for myself—I shall go ; for a strong constraint is upon me.'  
These words uttered, I mounted the land from the ship and the sea-shore.

Now when at last I was come through wondrous glades of the forest



Close to the palace of Circe, that mistress of many enchantments,  
There I was met by the god of the golden wand, Hermeias,  
While to the palace anigh I was drawing. A youth he resembled  
Scarce with a down on the lip, in the flower of grace and of beauty.  
Forthwith grasping me firm by the hand he addressed me a greeting :  
' Whither, unfortunate, thus dost thou wander alone in the highlands,  
Strange to the place ? It is surely thy comrades that yonder at Circe's  
Closely imprisoned as pigs lie wallowing deeply in litter.  
Comest thou hither perchance to release them ? Alas, I assure thee  
Never shalt thou come back, but remain there e'en as the others.  
Natheless listen ! for, lo, I will free thee of peril and save thee.  
See here ! Bearing this powerful charm, in the palace of Circe  
Enter—and thus from thy head shall be warded the day of destruction.  
Now will I tell thee of all the devices pernicious of Circe.  
Mead will she mix thee and mingle a noxious drug in the batter.  
Yet e'en thus her enchantment shall fail—so strongly against it  
Works the beneficent charm that I give thee ; and all will I tell thee.  
E'en at the moment that raising her long rod Circe shall strike thee,  
Drawing the sharp-edged sword that thou bear'st at thy side from the scabbard  
Spring on her—even on Circe—as eagerly longing to slay her.  
Then will she cower in fear and will offer thee tender embracements.  
Yield thee at last, no longer refusing the love of the goddess ;  
So will she grant to thy mates a release, and will kindly entreat thee.  
Yet thou shalt bid her to swear by the terrible oath of the Blesséd  
Never to plot a device that is evil against thee, to harm thee,  
Lest that unclothed and defenceless she make thee a fool and unman thee.'  
Thus then speaking, the charm to me offered the Slayer of Argus,  
Plucked from the ground ; and he showed me the plant and its fashion of growing :  
Black at the root ; but the flower was even as milk in its whiteness.  
Moly 'tis called by the gods, and to dig it is difficult labour,  
Labour for mortals, I mean—but to gods are possible all things.

Then Hermeias departed, returning to lofty Olympus  
Thorough the woods of the island ; and I to the palace of Circe  
Held on my way, while darkly my spirit was troubled within me.  
Soon at the doors of the palace I stood of the fair-tressed goddess.  
Here did I halt, and I called, and the goddess was ware of my calling.  
Speedily then forth coming she opened the glittering portal,  
Calling me in ; and with heart right heavy I followed and entered  
Into the hall, and a chair rich-studded with silver she gave me,  
Beautiful, skilfully wrought—and beneath for the feet was a footstool.

Then did she mix me a mead in a gold-wrought cup for a potion,  
Adding a noxious drug, in her spirit devising me evil.  
Now so soon I had taken and quaffed it (nor felt the bewitchment),  
Forthwith giving a stroke with her wand she commanded me, saying:  
'Off to the sty! Go, crouch thee along with the rest of thy fellows!'  
Thus did she speak; then drawing my sharp-edged sword from the scabbard  
Quickly on Circe I cast me, as eagerly longing to slay her.  
She with a shriek slipped under and clasping my knees in entreaty,  
Uttering woeful wails, these swift-winged words she addressed me:  
'Say, what mortal art thou, and from whence? what city and parents?  
Sorely I marvel that drinking the potion thou feelst not enchantment.  
Never before hath another of mortals resisted the potion,  
None that hath drunk it—when once by the door of his teeth it had entered.  
Surely within thy breast is a soul too strong for bewitchment.  
Verily thou art Odysseus the wary and wise, who was destined  
Hither to come (so said to me ever the Slayer of Argus),  
Home from the Trojan land in a swift black vessel returning.  
Nay now, hide in the scabbard thy weapon, and come let us hasten  
On to my couch to ascend and folded in tender embracement  
Revel in love and in sleep, and trust each other for ever.'  
Thus did she speak; forthwith then in answer thus I addressed her:  
'Nay, O Circe, thou canst not expect it of me to be loving,  
After bewitching and turning my comrades to pigs in thy palace.  
Me too, now thou hast gotten me here, thou deceitfully biddest  
Enter thy chamber and mount on thy bed, to repose me beside thee,  
Plotting, when bared and defenceless, to make me a fool and unman me.  
Nay, I will never consent to ascend on thy bed and repose me,  
Art thou not willing to swear me a solemn oath and to promise  
Never again to devise what is evil against me, to harm me.'  
Thus did I speak, and she readily gave me the oath I demanded.  
So, when at last she had given the oath and finished the plighting,  
Into the beautiful bed I ascended of Circe the goddess.

Now meanwhile in the halls were handmaids busily working,  
Even the four that attend on the goddess and serve in the palace.  
These are nymphs and the daughters of sacred groves and of fountains,  
Yea and of hallowed rivers that run to the salt of the ocean.  
One of them cast on the chairs their coverlets splendid of purple  
(Purple the tissue above; but she laid smooth linen beneath it),  
While that another in front of the chairs set tables in order  
Fashioned of silver, and baskets of gold on the tables she stationed.

Wine honey-hearted the third of the handmaids mixed in a wine-bowl ;  
Sweet was the wine and silver the bowl and golden the goblets.  
Water was borne by the fourth, and a fire set speedily blazing  
Under a spacious tripod, and quickly was heated the water.  
Then, so soon as the water had boiled in the glittering cauldron,  
Setting me into a bath, from the vessel capacious she poured it,  
Pleasantly tempered with cold, down over my head and my shoulders,  
Till from my limbs she had taken the soul-consuming exhaustion.  
Then, when my body was washed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
Casting around me a beautiful tunic and mantle, she led me  
Back to the hall, and gave me a chair rich-studded with silver,  
Beautiful, skilfully wrought ; and beneath for the feet was a footstool.  
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer  
Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,  
Bidding me wash, and she stationed a polished table beside me.  
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread, and she set it before me,  
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty,  
Urging me also to eat ; but my soul took pleasure in nothing ;  
Sitting I brooded on thoughts far other, and boded of evil.

Circe, as soon as she noticed me sitting, and over the viands  
Busying never a hand, as with grievous sorrow afflicted,  
Placed her anigh to my side, and with swift-winged words she addressed me :  
‘Why art thou sitting, Odysseus, as dumb as a man that is voiceless,  
Eating thy heart, nor touchest the food nor touchest the wine-cup ?  
Surely thou bodest of treason again ! Nay, truly thou shouldst not  
Cherish the fear, for I gave thee an oath and solemnly sware it.’  
Thus did she speak ; and at once these words I addressed her in answer :  
‘Yea, O Circe,—but how shall a man that is honest and decent  
Find in his heart to delight him in food and in quaffing the wine-cup,  
Ere that he gaineth release for his friends and beholds them before him ?  
Dost thou persuade me to eat and to drink with a friendly intention,  
Free them—and grant me again to behold my beloved companions.’

Thus did I speak. Then forth from the hall went Circe the goddess  
Bearing her wand in the hand ; and she opened the doors of the pig-sty.  
Out of it all of them trooped, like nine-year hogs in appearance.  
Then in the front of her huddled they stood, and passing amidst them  
Each of the beasts in his turn with a different drug she anointed.  
Straight dropped off from the bodies the bristles that thickly had grown there  
Bred by the venom pernicious that Circe the goddess had given.

Men they became once more, and younger they seemed than aforetime,  
Yea and goodlier far to behold and taller in person.

Quickly they knew me and clung to my hands, each after the other,  
All by a passionate sobbing o'erwhelmed ; and the mansion around us  
Echoed the terrible wail, and even the goddess had pity.

Placing her then at my side thus spake to me Circe the goddess :  
' Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wifeul Odysseus,  
Now to thy swift-winged vessel return and the shore of the ocean.  
There shall ye firstly of all draw out of the water the vessel ;  
All of the gear then stowing away, and the goods, in the caverns,  
Hither thyself come back with the rest of thy trusty companions.'

Thus did she speak, and within me my valiant soul was persuaded.  
So I betook me at once to the ship and the shore of the ocean.  
Here on the swift-winged ship I discovered my faithful companions  
Uttering woeful laments and shedding tears in abundance.  
Then, as the calves of a farm encircle the cows from the pasture  
Home to the steading returned, full-fed and contented with grazing—  
All come frisking around them together, nor longer the farmyard  
Keepeth them back, and with ceaseless lowings they joyfully gambol  
Greeting their mothers—so seeing me standing before them my comrades  
Thronged me about ; and they wept—for it verily seemed to their fancy  
Even as though they had come to the land of their fathers, the rugged  
Ithacan isle, and the town that was home of their youth and their birthplace.  
Then with a pitiful wail these swift-winged words they addressed me :  
' Seeing thee safely returned, O master, we joy at thy coming,  
Even as though we had reached our own dear Ithacan island.  
Yet—ah, tell us the tale of the fate of thy other companions.'  
Thus did they speak, but with words consoling I answered them, saying :  
' Nay, let us firstly of all draw out of the water the vessel ;  
All of the gear then stowing away, and the goods, in the caverns,  
Quickly bestir yourselves and all make ready to follow ;  
So shall ye see your mates in the wonderful palace of Circe  
Eating and drinking—for there they enjoy unfailing abundance.'  
Thus did I speak, and hearing my words all quickly obeyed me,  
All save Eurylochus, who had fain withholden his comrades.  
Calling aloud to his mates these swift-winged words he addressed them :  
' Ah, unfortunates, where will ye go ? Why love ye misfortune,  
Getting you down to the palace of Circe the goddess, who surely  
Either to pigs or to wolves or to ravening lions will change us,  
Ever to serve as the guards of her house, enthralled to her service,

*Odysseus* Just as befell when before to the innermost den of the Cyclops  
Ventured the men who followed this all too hardy Odysseus ?  
*Odysseus* Yea, it is he through whose audacious folly they perished !  
Thus did he speak ; and I pondered in doubt, and it seemed to me better  
Drawing the long-edged sword by my sinewy thigh from the scabbard  
Swiftly to smite him his head clean off and to tumble it earthward,  
Though right near me in kin was the man ; which seeing, my comrades,  
One and the other, with words of entreaty restraining addressed me :  
‘ Zeus-born, lo, this man will we suffer, if such be thy pleasure,  
Here on the spot to remain and to keep by the ship and defend it,  
While for ourselves—lead on to the wonderful palace of Circe ! ’

These words uttered, they mounted the land from the ship and the sea-shore,  
Nor stayed Eurylochus by the hollow vessel remaining ;  
He too followed, for much was he cowed by my terrible anger.  
Meantime all of the rest of my mates in her palace had Circe  
Carefully tended and bathed and anointed with oil of the olive ;  
Then she had clothed them in raiment, in mantles of wool and in doublets.  
All of them banqueting nobly we found in the hall of the palace.  
Then as they looked each one on the face of the others and knew them,  
Weeping they made a lament, and the house with the wailing resounded,  
Till at the last came nigh and addressed me the beautiful goddess :  
‘ Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
Wake no longer this violent weeping ! I know it myself too  
How on the teeming expanses of ocean ye ceaselessly suffered,  
How, too, mortals unkind on the dry land cruelly used you.  
Nay come, sit and regale you with viands and quaff of the wine-cup,  
Till once more ye recover the spirit and courage within you,  
E’en as it was on the day when ye sailed from shores of the homeland,  
Rock-bound ! Ithaca’s isle. Ye are wayworn still and despondent,  
Always the terrible journey recalling ; nor ever for gladness  
Have ye a heart—since verily bitter affliction ye suffered.’  
Thus did she speak, and within us the valiant soul was persuaded.  
Here then every day till the whole of the year was completed  
Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup.

Now when the year was complete with the slow revolution of seasons,  
After the waning of months, when the long days came of the summer,  
Calling me forth from the palace addressed me my faithful companions :  
‘ Now, good Sir, it is time to remember thy native country,  
Beest thou destined indeed to escape all perils and safely

Come to thy well-built home once more and the land of thy fathers.'  
 Thus did they speak, and within me the valiant soul was persuaded.  
 So for the rest of the day till the sun went down in the ocean  
 Sitting we feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,  
 Till, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,  
 Weary they laid them to sleep in the shadowy halls of the palace.  
 Then to the beautiful bed I ascended of Circe the goddess.  
 Here I besought her, embracing her knees, and she heard my entreaty,  
 While upraising my voice these swift-winged words I addressed her :  
 'Circe, I pray thee at length to accomplish the promise thou madest  
 Homeward to send me. Already the heart in my bosom is restless,  
 Ay and the hearts of my men ; and they weary the spirit within me,  
 Alway around me lamenting whenever thou haply art absent.'  
 Thus did I speak ; whereat made answer the beautiful goddess :  
 'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
 Nay, no longer remain unwillingly here in my palace.  
 First howbeit ye needs must go once more on a journey ;  
 E'en to the mansion of Hades and dread Queen Persephoneia,  
 There to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,  
 Blind old prophet of Thebes whose reason remains as aforetime.  
 Even in death he is still permitted by Persephoneia  
 Mind to possess—he only : the rest are fluttering phantoms.'

Thus did she speak—and my spirit was utterly broken within me ;  
 Bitterly weeping I sat on the bed, and the heart in my bosom  
 Cared no longer to live on the earth or to look on the sunlight.  
 Then, when at last I was sated of weeping and writhing in anguish,  
 Speaking again, these words I addressed to the goddess in answer :  
 'Circe, a journey as this what guide hath the power to pilot ?  
 Ne'er in a black-hulled vessel hath mortal descended to Hades.'  
 Thus did I speak ; whereat made answer the beautiful goddess :  
 'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
 Let not the want of a leader to pilot thy vessel distress thee.  
 Only with mast upraised and the white sails spread to the breezes  
 Seated remain. Of itself will the breath of the Boreas bear her.  
 Now so soon as thy vessel has traversed the stream of the Ocean,  
 Where is a shore rich-soiled and copses of Persephoneia,  
 Poplars soaring aloft and willows widowed of fruitage,  
 Beaching her there on the strand of the eddying current of Ocean,  
 Press thou forward thyself to the mouldering mansion of Hades.  
 Into the Acheron here red-flaming Phlegethon poureth,



And Cocytus, a channel that leads from the Stygian water,  
Rocky ravine connecting the two loud-thundering rivers.  
Drawing anigh to the place, O hero, e'en as I bid thee,  
Dig thee a trench of a cubit in length and a cubit in wideness.  
Then all round it to all of the dead pour out a libation,  
Firstly of honey and milk, and of wine well-mellowed thereafter,  
Thirdly of water; and sprinkle thereon white meal of the barley.  
Make then many a vow to the host of the bodiless phantoms,  
Ithaca reaching, the cow that is best of thy herd and is barren  
Straight thou'lt slay in thy home, and a pyre deck richly with presents,  
Solely to Teiresias devoting a ram as oblation  
Perfectly black and the finest of all of the flocks of thy homestead.  
Then, when appeased with thy prayers are Death's illustrious peoples,  
See that thou slaughter a male of the sheep and a female, a black one,  
Turning their heads to the nethermost Gloom; but with vision averted  
Gaze thou intent on the stream of the river; and soon shall surround thee  
Many a phantom—the spirits of those who are dead and departed.  
Now is the moment to call on thy comrades and urgently bid them,  
Flaying the sheep, which lie by the steel unpitied slaughterer,  
Burnt oblation to make and prayers to the deities offer,  
Hades' terrible power and dread Queen Persephoneia.  
Then, with the keen-eyed sword at thy thigh drawn forth from the scabbard,  
Seated remain, restraining the host of the bodiless phantoms  
Back from the blood, till of Teiresias thou hast gotten an answer.  
Then right soon will the prophet approach, O leader of heroes.  
He shall declare thee the path and the bounds of thy journey and show thee  
How to return to thy home and the teeming ocean to traverse.'

Thus did she speak, and soon came Morning enthroned in her glory.  
Then, as she bade me, I clothed me in raiment, in tunic and mantle,  
While that the nymph threw round her a garment of glistening whiteness,  
Delicate, lovely, and over her waist then fastened a girdle  
Beautiful, fashioned of gold; and her head in a hood she enveloped.  
Straight to the hall of the palace I went and I roused my companions,  
Standing in turn near each, and with words right gentle addressed them:  
'Lie no longer asleep enjoying the sweetness of slumber!  
Come, let us go! since all hath she told me, the beautiful Circe.'

Thus did I speak, and within them the valiant soul was persuaded.  
Still, not even from here did I bring unscathed my companions.  
Youngest of these was a certain Elpenor, neither exceeding



Sturdy in battle, nor having a mind compacted of wisdom.  
He now far from the rest on the wonderful dwelling of Circe,  
Longing for coolness and heavy with wine, had reclined him to slumber ;  
Then, as his mates were stirring, perceiving the voices and clatter,  
Suddenly starting he sprang to his feet, and wholly forgetting  
Back to descend by the way of the steep-built stair of the ladder,  
Fell right down from the roof, and out of the joint of the backbone  
Broken at once was the neck ; and his spirit departed to Hades.

Now when the rest were well on the road these words I addressed them :  
' Homeward doubtless ye deem—to the well-loved land of your fathers—  
Now ye are bound ; but a way far other hath Circe appointed,  
E'en to the mansion of Hades and dread Queen Persephoneia,  
There to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner.'  
Thus did I speak, and their hearts were utterly broken within them.  
Sitting them down on the spot and tearing their hair they lamented,  
Vainly—for nought was the profit they gained by their weeping and wailing.

While to the swift-winged ship we returned and the shore of the ocean  
Heavily laden with grief, outpouring tears in abundance,  
Meantime Circe departed and reaching the black-hulled vessel  
Tethered beside it a male of the sheep and a female, a black one,  
Easily passing us by ; for a goddess, unless she be willing,  
Who shall behold with the eyes while hither or thither she goeth ?



# ODYSSEY BOOK XI

**N**OW when again to the sea we had come and arrived at the vessel,  
Her did we firstly of all drag down to the vast salt water,  
Then to the black-hulled vessel we carried the sails and the mainmast,  
Lifted upon it the sheep we had found and quickly embarked us,  
Heavily laden with grief and shedding tears in abundance.

Following after us then in the wake of the blue-prowed vessel  
Fair stern-breezes arose, sail-swelling and kindly companions,  
Sent by the fair-tressed nymph, dread goddess with voice as a mortal.  
So, when the gear of the ship we had busily stowed and adjusted,  
Seated we watched while kept to her course by the wind and the steersman  
All day long with the sails full swollen she voyaged the waters.

Set was already the sun and darkened was every roadway  
Ere to the bounds we arrived of the fathomless stream of the Ocean.  
Here the Cimmerian people inhabit a land and a city  
Shrouded in darkness of mist and of cloud, since never upon them  
Glorious Eëlios looks down with his radiant daylight,  
Neither whenever he mounteth the starry expanses of heaven,  
Nor as again to the earth he returns and from heaven descendeth ;  
Ever a darkness of death o'erhangs these pitiful mortals.  
Here we arrived, and we drave on the beach, and we took from the vessel  
Both of the sheep and ascended the shore of the river of Ocean,  
Pressing ahead till we came to the place foretold us by Circe.  
Here held Eurylochus with his mate Perimedes the victims.  
Then, with the keen-edged sword on my thigh drawn forth from its scabbard  
Digging a trench of a cubit in length and a cubit in wideness,  
Round it to all of the souls of the dead I outpoured a libation,  
Firstly of honey and milk, and of wine well-mellowed thereafter,  
Thirdly of water, and sprinkled thereon white meal of the barley,  
Offering many a vow to the host of the bodiless phantoms,  
Ithaca reaching, the cow that was best of my herd and was barren  
Surely to slay in my home, and a pyre deck richly with presents,  
Solely to Teiresias devoting a ram as oblation  
Perfectly black and the finest of all of the flocks of my homestead.

Now when at length I had ended appeasing the people of Hades  
Duly with vow and with prayer, I opened the throats of the victims  
Over the trench ; and the black blood flowed ; and behold, they collected,

(Odyssey) Spirits from Erebus—souls of the dead, from the body departed :  
(m) Brides and unmarried youths, old men outworn by affliction,  
(m) Maidens of delicate bloom, their hearts new-laden with sorrow ;  
(m) Many besides I beheld sore wounded with bronzen lances,  
Warriors slain in the fight, their bloodstained armour upon them.  
Numberless all to the trench came flocking from this and from that side  
Raising a wondrous cry ; and a cold, pale terror possessed me.  
Now was the moment to call on my comrades and urgently bid them,  
Flaying the sheep, which lay by the steel unpitied slaughtered,  
Burnt oblation to make and prayers to the deities offer,  
Hades' terrible power and dread Queen Persephoneia.  
Then, with the keen-edged sword on my thigh drawn forth from its scabbard,  
Seated I watched, restraining the host of the bodiless phantoms  
Back from the blood, till of Teiresias I had gotten an answer.

First of the shades to approach was the soul of Elpenor my shipmate,  
Since not yet was he buried beneath earth's wide-way'd surface ;  
Still it was lying—the corse that we left in the palace of Circe—  
All unwept and unburied ; for other anxiety urged us.  
Looking upon him I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion ;  
Uttering therefore my voice, these swift-winged words I addressed him :  
' Say, how camest thou down to the gloom and the shadows, Elpenor ?  
Fleeter on foot thou camest than I in my dark-hulled vessel.'  
Thus did I speak ; whereat with a groan he addressed me in answer :  
' Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
Ruined was I by the doom of a god and excess in the wine-cup.  
Having aroused me from sleep on the palace of Circe, forgetting  
Back to return by the way of the steep-built ladder, I tumbled  
Right from the roof of the house, and out of the joint of the backbone  
Broken at once was the neck, and my spirit departed to Hades.  
Now, by the love of the absent beloved at home I beseech thee,  
Both by the love of thy wife and the father that cherished thy childhood,  
Ay and by Telemachus, sole son in thy palace remaining . . .  
Well do I know that departing from here, from the mansion of Hades,  
Back thou'lt hold for the isle Aëaea thy well-built vessel—  
Here when thou com'st, O bear me in memory, prince, I implore thee,  
Neither unwept and unburied abandon me homeward returning,  
Parting in haste—lest aye as a curse from the gods I shall haunt thee.  
Burn me, I pray, on a pyre with my armour and all my equipment ;  
Also erect me a tomb on the strand of the grey-green ocean,  
Haply for ages to come of a luckless man a remembrance !



IN THE WORLD OF THE DEAD



These my entreaties fulfil, and my oar set aloft on the barrow,  
Rowing with which when alive so often I toiled with my comrades.'  
So did he speak; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed him:  
'Thus will I do, poor friend, and all of thy wishes accomplish.'  
So with disconsolate words did we sit conversing together,  
I on the one side over the blood outstretching my broadsword,  
While on the other related his story the ghost of my comrade.

Then drew near me the spirit of her who had perished—my mother,  
Daughter of Autolycus great-hearted, Anticleia,  
Whom still living I left when to sacred Troy I departed.  
Looking upon her I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion.  
Yet e'en thus did I suffer her not, though sorely it grieved me,  
Nigh to the blood, ere Teiresias should give me his answer.

Then drew near me the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,  
Holding a sceptre of gold, and he knew forthwith and addressed me:  
'Zeus-born so of Laertes, thou wise and wary Odysseus,  
Why, unfortunate, why now, leaving the realms of the sunlight,  
Comest thou hither to visit the dead and their dolorous country?  
Nay, hold back from the trench and withdrawing thy keen-edged weapon  
Grant me to drink of the blood; so truth shall I tell thee unerring.'  
Thus did he speak, and withdrawing my broadsword studded with silver  
Back in the scabbard I thrust it; and after the gore he had tasted  
Then forthwith these words did the faultless prophet address me:  
'Home to regain, sweet home, is thy wish, O famous Odysseus.  
Ah but a difficult task will a deity make it, I fear me!  
Ne'er will Poseidon forgive: so deep in his heart is implanted  
Anger because thou hast blinded his son, his beloved, the Cyclops.  
Natheless still ye shall come, though suffering sore, to the homeland,  
Knowst thou to bridle the lust of thy heart and the hearts of thy comrades  
Whensoever thou first with thy well-built vessel approachest  
Isle Thrinacia, fleeing the surge of the violet ocean.  
Pasturing there ye shall find fat flocks and the kine of the sun-god  
Eëlios, who all overseeth and all overheareth.  
Now if ye leave them unharmed, and earnestly press on your journey,  
Verily Ithaca still shall ye reach, though suffering sorely;  
Else—if ye harm them at all—I predict then utter perdition  
Both for thy ship and thy mates—while thou, e'en shouldst thou escape it,  
Late and in pitiful plight and with none of thy comrades surviving,  
Borne on an alien ship shalt arrive, and at home find sorrows.



Men thou shalt find, overbearing and insolent, eating thy substance,  
Wooving thy godlike wife, and bringing her presents as suitors.  
Yet these arrogant deeds thou'lt surely avenge at thy coming.  
Then, when at last thou hast slain in the halls of thy palace the suitors,  
Either by cunning or else by the sharp sword openly slaughtered,  
Forth once more thou shalt fare, with a well-shaped oar on thy shoulder,  
Till to a people thou comest that never hath heard of the ocean,  
Yea to a people that mix no salt with the food that they live on ;  
Neither hath any a vessel with cheeks red-painted beholden,  
Neither hath knowledge of oars which serve as the wings of a vessel.  
Now will I give thee a sign most certain, that cannot escape thee.  
Whensoever it haps that a chance wayfarer that meets thee  
Says 'tis a winnowing fan that thou bearest on thy glistering shoulder,  
Fixing the well-shaped oar in the ground, there leave it implanted.  
Next, to Poseidon the king thou shalt offer a goodly oblation,  
Even a male of the swine and a male of the herd and the sheepfold ;  
Then turn homeward again, and many an offering holy  
Slay to the deathless gods who inhabit the infinite heaven,  
Each one after the other. At last shall a death from the ocean,  
Such as of deaths is the mildest, befall thee and gently remove thee,  
Weary and worn, in a smooth old age ; and around thee thy people  
Happy shall live. Lo, this is the truth that I tell thee unerring.'

So did he speak ; and I answered in turn, and thus I addressed him :  
'Teiresias, all this have doubtless spun the immortals.  
Now come, tell me a thing that I ask and clearly explain it !  
Here do I notice the spirit of her who has perished, my mother.  
Silent she sitteth anigh to the blood, nor once has she ventured  
Even to look in the face of her son, or a word to address him.  
Answer me, prince—how might she perceive who standeth before her ?'  
So did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :  
'Easy to say is the thing ; and I straight in thy heart will implant it.  
Whichsoever of all of the ghosts of the dead thou permittest  
Nearer to come to the blood, it will truth foretell thee unerring ;  
Shouldst thou deny the approach, such soul will depart and will vanish.'

These words uttered, the spirit re-entered the mansion of Hades,  
Spirit of Teiresias, king-seer, his oracles ended,  
While unmoved on the spot I remained, till lastly my mother,  
Drawing anigh, of the black blood drank, and knowing me straightway  
Uttered a pitiful wail, and with swift-winged words she addressed me :

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‘Tell me, my child, how camest thou here to the gloom and the shadows,  
Being alive? ’Tis a sight full hard for the living to look on.  
All in the midst are rivers enormous, terrible currents,  
Ocean chiefly of all, not possible ever to traverse  
Should one journey afoot nor sail in a well-built vessel.  
Camest thou hither when voyaging back from the land of the Trojans?  
Long hast thou wandered and far with thy men and thy vessels, and never  
Ithaca reached and beholden thy wife in the halls of thy palace?’  
So did she speak; and in turn then answering thus I addressed her:  
‘Mother, my mother, necessity bringeth me hither to Hades,  
Here to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner.  
Never as yet was I nigh to Achaea, nor yet on the homeland  
Planted a foot, but was tossed by the ceaseless storm of affliction  
Ever from that first day when I followed the great Agamemnon  
Sailing to Ilium famed for its horses, to fight with the Trojans.  
Come now, answer me this that I ask thee and clearly explain it:  
What was the doom wherewith low-laying Death overcame thee,  
Whether a weary disease—or did Artemis, darter of arrows,  
Launching her painless shafts assail thee and suddenly slay thee?  
Speak to me too of my sire, and the son that I left in my homestead,  
Whether my honour is still in their hands, or is even already  
Held by another; and speak they of me as if never returning?  
Tell of my wedded wife moreover the counsel and purpose:  
Whether abideth she still with her son, all guarding securely,  
Or doth already a chief of Achaea possess her in marriage?’  
Thus did I speak, and at once made answer my honour’d mother:  
‘Ay assuredly, still with a steadfast heart she remaineth  
There in the halls of thy palace; and filled with the gloom of her sadness  
Waneth the day and waneth the night, while ever she weepeth.  
Nor is another adorned with thy honour; in quiet possession  
Telemachus directs the demesne, and at banquets abundant  
Feasteth—for such it beseems a dispenser of justice to furnish,  
Seeing that others invite him. But ever thy father abideth  
Up at the farm, nor descends to the town, and possesseth for sleeping  
Neither a bed nor a wrapper of wool nor a glistening blanket.  
During the winter he sleeps, as the servants sleep, in the farmstead  
Nigh to the hearth in the ash, and a beggarly raiment he weareth;  
Then, when the summer is come and the harvest’s luxuriant season,  
Oft in the nooks all round of the orchard knoll of the vineyard  
Strown is his bed of the leaves down-fallen and lying in hollows.  
Here aye groaning he lieth and nurseth his great grief greater,

*Odysseus* Yearning for thee to return, and his years lie heavy upon him.  
Thus, e'en thus, did I perish as well and my doom I encountered.  
*Odysseus* Neither within our halls did the keen-eyed darter of arrows  
Launching her painless shafts assail me and suddenly slay me,  
Neither did any disease come over me, such as so often  
Painfully wasteth and out of the limbs extracteth the spirit ;  
'Twas but my longing for thee and thy counsels, my hero Odysseus,  
Yea and thy tender affection, that reft me of life and its sweetness.'

So did she speak, and I pondered thereon and yearned in my spirit,  
Longing to clasp to my bosom the soul of my dear dead mother.  
Three times forward I sprang with a heart which bade me embrace her ;  
Three times out of my hands as a shadow or vision of dreamland  
Fled she, and ever became in my heart more bitter the anguish.  
Then did I utter my voice and with swift-winged words I addressed her :  
'Mother beloved, why waitest thou not when I long to embrace thee,  
So that we twain might wind our arms thus lovingly round us,  
Sating ourselves, yea even in Hades, with chill lamentation ?  
Or is it only a phantom that high Queen Persephoneia  
Sendeth, to make more bitter the grief wherewith I bewail thee ?'  
Thus did I speak, and at once made answer my honour'd mother :  
'Ah me, truly, my son, thou'rt most ill-fated of all men !  
Nowise Persephoneia, the daughter of Zeus, hath deceived thee,  
Seeing that such, when he dieth, is ever the lot of a mortal :  
Then no longer the flesh and the bones are bound by the sinews ;  
These doth the heat of the flame with its irresistible fury  
Conquer, as soon as the life from the whitened bones is departed ;  
Then as a dream forth-flying the soul flits hither and thither.  
Now to the light haste back right eagerly, all that I tell thee  
Bearing in mind, nor later forget to thy wife to relate it.'

Thus did we twain hold converse together ; and round me the women  
Gathered—for thither compelled them the high Queen Persephoneia—  
Even the wives and the daughters of famous rulers and heroes.  
Thronging from every side to the dark red blood they collected.  
Then, as myself I bethought each after the other to question,  
This was the plan that appeared to my mind as the best and the wisest :  
Drawing the keen-edged sword at my sinewy thigh from the scabbard,  
Many together to drink of the dark red blood I allowed not.  
Each one after the other in order approached it, and singly  
Each declared her descent ; and to all I addressed me with questions.

Tyro first I beheld, of a stock right noble descended ;  
Daughter she boasted herself of Salmoneus, glorious hero,  
Wife, as she said, of a son begotten by Aeolus, Cretheus.  
Once of a river enamoured, the heaven-descended Enipeus,  
(He is the river the fairest by far on earth that is flowing)  
Often she wandered along by Enipeus' beautiful currents ;  
Likened to whom did the Shaker of Earth, land-girding Poseidon,  
Lay him adown by her side at the mouth of the eddying river.  
Purple the wave stood round them, as solid and huge as a mountain,  
Arching above and hiding the god and the earth-born woman.  
Then did he, loosing the zone of the maid, shed slumber upon her.  
Now so soon as Poseidon his amorous work had accomplished,  
Tenderly clasping her hand he addressed her and greeted her kindly :  
'Woman, be glad in my love ! When the year's revolution is ended  
Glorious children to bear will be thine ; for unfruitful is never  
Couch of immortal. But see that thou carefully cherish and tend them.  
Go to thy home, and be still, nor utter the name that I tell thee :  
Lo, it is I that address thee, the King Earth-shaking Poseidon.'  
These words uttered, he plunged in the depths of the billowing ocean.  
So she conceived and she brought forth twins, both Neleus and also  
Pelias, ministers mighty of Zeus the omnipotent Father  
Both of them. Pelias dwelt in the widespread land of Iolcos,  
Wealthy in flocks, and the home of his brother was Pylos the sandy.  
Also to Cretheus she bare, this queen unrivalled of women,  
Aeson, and then Pheres, and the charioteer Amythaon.

Antiope then next I beheld, who was child of Asopus.  
She, as she boasted, had slept in the arms of the Father of heaven,  
Yea and had borne to the Sire two sons, Amphion and Zethus.  
These first founded the city of Thebes and builded her portals  
Seven, and crowned her with towers, for towerless were they unable  
Wide-spaced Thebes securely to hold, though great was their power.

Alcmené was the next I beheld, Amphitryon's consort.  
She did the hero with heart of a lion, the labour-enduring  
Hercules bear, conceived in embracement of Zeus the Almighty.  
Megara too I beheld, fair daughter of Creon the haughty,  
Wife of Amphitryon's son, whose strength was for ever unwearied.

Next was the mother of Oedipodés, fair queen Epicasté,  
She who a horrible deed with a mind unconscious committed,

*Chloris* Wedding her son, who had taken the life of his sire and thereafter  
*86* Married her ; then to the world all suddenly heaven revealed it.  
*86-100* He in the beautiful city of Thebes, still suffering sorrows,  
Ruled the Cadmeans, fulfilling calamitous counsels of heaven.  
She went down to the mansion of Hades, the terrible Warder,  
Having suspended a noose hung sheer from the height of a rafter,  
Whelmed by her grief and despair ; and to him full many a sorrow  
Left she behind—such woes as a mother's avengers accomplish.

Chloris the beautiful then I beheld, whom formerly Neleus  
Married for sake of her beauty—and numberless presents he offered ;  
Youngest daughter was she of Amphion, the son of a chieftain  
Iasus. (Minyan Orchomenus was the town of the monarch.)  
She as the Pylian queen brought forth right glorious children,  
Nestor, and then Chromius, and Periclymenus the undaunted.  
Sister to these was Pero the stately, a wonder for mortals.  
Her all neighbouring chiefs came wooing, but willing was Neleus  
Only to give her to him who the crook-horned broad-browed cattle  
Safely from Phylace brought, where Iphiclus wielded his power—  
Difficult cattle to lift ; and alone did the prophet unerring  
Venture to drive them away ; but a fate right grievous entrapped him,  
Even the torment of bonds and the savage revenge of the herdsmen,  
Till, when the fulness of time with its days and its months was completed,  
Seasons returning again till the year had repeated its circle,  
Then at the last did the power of Iphiclus set him at freedom,  
After he uttered his rede ; and the counsel of Zeus was accomplished.

Ledé also I saw, the illustrious wife of the monarch  
Tyndareüs. Two valiant sons did she bear to her husband,  
Castor the tamer of steeds, and the boxer renowned Polydeuces.  
These doth the Earth, great Mother of life, now hold in her bosom.  
Yet, though buried below, great honour they have of the Father,  
Sometimes coming to life, and on days alternate returning  
Back to the dead ; and worship is paid them as peers of immortals.

Next then Iphimedeia I saw, who was wife of Aloeus.  
Once (she was wont to affirm) she had slept in the arms of Poseidon,  
Whom two sons she had borne, both destined early to perish,  
Otus like to a god and the widely renowned Ephialtes,  
Tallest of all that the earth e'er nourished, the Mother of harvests,  
Fairest moreover by far, save only the famous Orion.

Yea and truly when nine years old nine cubits they measured  
Even in breadth ; but in height they had grown nine fathoms already.  
These—so runneth the tale—once threatened the gods of Olympus  
Din terrific of battle to rouse and the whirlwind of combat.  
Ossa they strove on the crest of Olympus to pile, and on Ossa  
Pelion waving with forests, to help them in scaling the heaven.  
Ay and this they had done, had they reached full measure of manhood  
Ere by the son who was gotten by Zeus of the fair-tressed Leto  
Both of them perished ; nor yet had the first down under their temples  
Blossomed, nor clothed was the chin with the beard's luxuriant outgrowth.

Phaédre then I beheld and Procris, and fair Ariadne  
Daughter of Minos, the wizard of bale. Her formerly Theseus,  
Bearing from Crete, to the hill of the sacred city of Athens  
Listed to bring, but he won not his pleasure, for Artemis slew her  
Where in the sea-girt Dia the god Dionysus accused her.

Maera and Clýmene then I beheld, and vile Eriphylé,  
Her that a trinket of gold as the price of her husband accepted.  
Nay, but I never shall finish the tale of the women, or name them,  
All whom there I beheld, both wives and daughters of heroes ;  
Ere I had ended had waned the ambrosial night—and already  
Time 'tis to lay me to sleep, by my swift-winged ship and my shipmates,  
Or in thy palace ; and ye and the gods will provide me an escort."

Thus did he speak, and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,  
Holden as 'twere by a spell in the shadowy hall of the palace.  
First did the white-armed Arété find words to address them :  
"Say, Phaeacians, where now standeth the man in your liking,  
Both as to favour and form and to wit well-balanced within him ?  
Though as a guest he is mine, yet all of us share in the honour.  
Not too hastily homeward dismiss him, nor, seeing he needs them,  
Charily stint with the gifts, since verily many a treasure  
Lies, by the grace of the gods, stored up in the halls of your homesteads."

Then in their midst made answer the hero, old Echenéus,  
One that was honoured as Elder of all Phaeacian nobles :  
"Truly, my friends, not wide of the mark nor of right and of reason  
Speaketh the queen. She is wise. It beseemeth us well to obey her.  
Yet 'tis on Alcinous that dependeth the word, and the action."



Then King Alcinous outspoke and answered him saying :

“ Ay and in sooth it shall hold, this word she hath spoken, I swear it,  
Sure as I live and am king of the bold Phaeacian sea-folk.  
Still, let the stranger endure, though sorely he yearn for his homeland,  
Natheless here to remain to the morrow, till all of the presents  
Duly in order I set ; and my people shall see to the convoy,  
All of them—chiefly myself ; for my will is a law to the nation.”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

“ O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
E'en for the space of a year wert thou to command me to tarry  
While ye prepare me an escort and load me with glorious presents,  
Willing I were to remain, and it were much more to my profit  
Thus with a well-filled hand to arrive at the land of my fathers :  
Far more love and worship I sure would win from the people,  
All who beheld me returning in safety to Ithaca's island.”

Him King Alcinous addressing again gave answer :

“ Nay but, Odysseus, believe not that looking on thee we imagine  
Thee as a weaver of wiles and a crafty deceiver—a fellow  
Such as in every quarter the black earth breeds in abundance,  
Fashioning mazes of lies whence egress none can discover.  
Thine is the beauty of words, and within thee is keen understanding.  
Skilfully, even as singeth a bard, thou tellest thy story,  
All those pitiful troubles of thine and the woes of the Argives.  
Come now, tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it :  
Saw'st thou not any of those thy heroic companions who also  
Sailed to the city of Troy, and their doom encountered and perished ?  
Long, unspeakably long is the night, nor as yet in the palace  
Time is for sleep ; so all of thy wonderful story relate me.  
E'en to the sacred dawn will I patiently listen, if only  
Here in my hall thou art willing to tell me the rest of thy travails.”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

“ O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
There is a time for the telling of tales, time also for slumber.  
Still, if thou longest to list to me further, I may not deny thee,  
Nor will I shrink from recounting a far more pitiful story,  
Even the sorrows of those of my comrades who perished thereafter,  
Those who, at Troy unscathed in the terrible turmoil of battle,  
Perished foully at home by the wiles of a treacherous woman.



Now when the phantom host of the souls of the women had vanished,  
Scattered hither and thither by chaste Queen Persephoneia,  
Then drew near me the spirit of King Agamemnon Atrides,  
Sorrowing. Round him was gathered a throng of the others who likewise  
Met with their destined doom and died in the house of Aegisthus.  
Knowing me straight, so soon as the dark red blood he had tasted,  
Shrilly he uttered a wail and poured forth tears in abundance,  
Eagerly stretching extended his arms in his longing to reach me,  
Vainly—for no more strength was surviving within him or power  
Such as was present before in the flexible limbs of his body.

Now when I saw him I wept, for my spirit was moved to compassion ;  
Uttering therefore my voice these swift-winged words I addressed him :  
' Atreus' glorious son, O Monarch of men Agamemnon,  
What was the doom wherewith low-laying Death overcame thee ?  
Whether did thee and thy ships o'erwhelm Earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Sending the adverse blast of a dolorous tempest against thee,  
Or was it hostile men that on dry land wrought thy destruction,  
Whilst that ye drave from the pasture the fair-fleeced sheep and the oxen,  
Or as 'around some city ye fought for the spoil and the women ?'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith these words he addressed me in answer :  
' Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
Neither did me and my ships o'erwhelm Earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Sending an adverse blast of a dolorous tempest against me,  
Nor was it hostile men that on dry land wrought my destruction.  
He that my ruin devised and plotted my death was Aegisthus,  
He and that woman accurséd, my wife. To his palace he bade me,  
Feasted me, killed me—as one might slaughter an ox at the manger.  
Thus by a death full wretched I died, and round me my comrades,  
Even as white-tusked hogs are slain one after the other  
While at the house of a wealthy and powerful lord is preparing  
Either a wedding or banquet of friends or a sumptuous wine-bout.  
Many a time hast thou been where warriors lay in their life-blood,  
Fallen when fighting alone or in midmost shock of the battle ;  
Ah but a sight like this—it had made thee to groan in thy spirit,  
How all round by the side of the bowl and the high-piled tables  
Slaughtered we lay in the hall, and with blood swam all of the pavement.  
Sound most woeful of all that I heard was the cry of Cassandra,  
Daughter of Priam, who, stabbed by the treacherous-soul'd Clytemnestra,  
Fell right over me there as I lay ; and my hands I uplifted,

*Ulysses*  
E'en though dying, to clutch at my sword ; but that pitiless she-wolf  
Left me, nor found in her heart, as I went to the mansion of Hades,  
Even my eyelids to close, or my lips press gently together.  
Verily nought is so dire, so shameless is nought, as a woman,  
Should she conceive in her heart some terrible deed to accomplish,  
Such as this woman hath done in devising an impious murder,  
Even the death of the lord of her youth. I believed I was coming  
Back to my children and all of my servants as one who was welcome  
Homeward returning ; but she, with a wickedness ne'er to be equalled,  
Infamy brought on herself and on every woman for ever,  
All that shall ever be born, yea even on her that is upright.'

Thus did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :  
'Ah ! Loud-thundering Zeus hath indeed on the offspring of Atreus  
Terribly wreaked his revenge by the means of the plottings of women,  
E'en from the very beginning. For Helen we perished in thousands ;  
Now in thy absence hath schemed Clytemnestra this treason against thee.'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :  
'Therefore beware thou too, nor to woman be weakly complaisant.  
Tell her not all of the truth that is known to thy innermost bosom.  
Part of it utter, and part keep carefully hidden within thee.  
Nay but I trow no death by the hand of thy wife shall befall thee,  
Since she is wise, full wise, with a mind well furnished with reason,  
Even the daughter of Icarius, sage Penelopeia.  
Her as a bride new-wedded we left in thy palace behind us,  
Sailing away to the war ; and a child on her bosom was lying,  
Then but a babe. In the ranks of the men now surely he sitteth,  
Happy in this—that his well-loved sire at his coming shall see him,  
Yea and be held in the arms of his son, as is right and is seemly.  
Me did this consort of mine . . . not e'en with the eyes did she let me  
Gaze with delight on my son. Ere this she had murdered her husband.  
Further a thing will I say—do thou ponder it wisely within thee :  
Openly dare not to enter a port of thy well-loved country ;  
Secretly put to the land. No woman is more to be trusted.  
Now come, tell me a thing that I ask thee and plainly declare it :  
Hear ye perchance some news of my son in the land of the living,  
Either in Orchomenos maybe or in Pylos the sandy,  
Or in the widespread city of Sparta with prince Menelaus ?  
Dead he is never, but still on the earth is my noble Orestes.'

So did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :

'Atreus' son, why thus dost thou ask me? I verily know not  
Whether he lives or is dead, and an evil is idle discussion.'

So in a mournful strain did we stand conversing together  
Sorrowing sadly ; and ever the great tears fell in abundance.  
Then drew near me the soul of the great Pelean Achilles,  
Also the souls of Patroclus and Antilochus the unrivalled,  
Ajax too, who excelled all others in form and in favour,  
All of the Dánaan chiefs save only the peerless Achilles.  
Straight did the soul of that warrior swift, old Aeacus' grandson,  
Know me, and wailing aloud these swift-winged words he addressed me :  
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus !  
Desperate one ! What next is the deed thou'lt wish to accomplish ?  
How dost thou dare to descend to the realms where dwell the departed,  
Senseless shadows, the phantoms of men whose labour is ended ?'  
So did he speak ; whereat these words I addressed him in answer :  
'Peleus' glorious son, O prince of Achaeans, Achilles,  
Seeking for Teiresias am I come, with intent to entreat him  
Counsel to give how best I shall reach rough Ithaca's island.  
Never as yet was I nigh to Achaea, nor yet on the homeland  
Planted a foot, but am worn with my woes, whilst never, Achilles,  
Never was man so blessed as thou in the past and thereafter.  
Erst, in the life on the earth, no less than a god we revered thee,  
We the Achaeans ; and now in the realm of the dead as a monarch  
Here thou dost rule ; then why should death thus grieve thee, Achilles ?'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith then answering thus he addressed me :  
'Speak not smoothly of death, I beseech, O famous Odysseus !  
Better by far to remain on the earth as the thrall of another,  
E'en of a portionless man that hath means right scanty for living,  
Rather than reign sole king in the realm of the bodiless phantoms.  
Come now, speak of my son ! of the brave young gallant inform me :  
Followed or followed he not to the war ? and became he a leader ?  
Say to me also if aught thou hast learnt of the glorious Peleus :  
Whether he still is revered by the powerful Myrmidon people,  
Or peradventure is scorned and dishonoured in Hellas and Phthia,  
Now that in hand and in foot he is feeble, by age overmastered,  
Neither again can I come to the light of the sun to avenge him,  
Such as I was when of yore on the widespread plain of the Trojans  
Slaying the best of the host of the foemen I succoured the Argives.  
Were I as such to return but a day to the home of my father

Quickly my arm's irresistible might I'd make to be hateful  
Unto the cowards that do him despise and deprive him of honour.'

Thus did he speak ; forthwith then answering thus I addressed him :  
' Verily nothing I learnt by report of the glorious Peleus,  
While of thy only begotten, Neóptolemus thy belovéd,  
All that I know will I truly relate, fulfilling thy wishes.  
I myself was the man who on board of my fair-trimmed vessel  
Brought him from Scyros' isle to the well-greaved sons of Achaea.  
Now whensoever around Troy city we sat in the council  
Foremost ever he spake, nor missed he the mark in his speaking ;  
None was experter but I and the godlike eloquent Nestor.  
Then, whensoever in war on the Trojan plain we contested,  
Never in midst of the throng he remained and the ranks of his comrades ;  
Far to the fore outleaping, in courage he yielded to no one.  
Many a warrior too did he slay in the terrible conflict.  
All of it ne'er can I tell, nor recount thee the names of the fallen,  
All of the host of the foemen he slew as he succoured the Argives ;  
Only of Telephus' son, who was smit by his sword, can I tell thee,  
Warrior Eurypylus ; and many a one of his comrades,  
Folk Ceteian, was slain through treacherous bribes of a woman.  
Goodlier man did I never behold save glorious Memnon.  
Then, as we mounted and hid in the horse that was made by Epéus,  
All of us Argive chiefs, and to me the command was entrusted  
Either to open the door of the well-hid ambush or close it,  
Then stood all of the others, the Danaan leaders and chieftains,  
Wiping the tears from their eyes, and with knees all quaking beneath them ;  
Him not once I perceived, not even a moment I noticed,  
Either a whit grown pale in his handsome face, or a teardrop  
Wiping away from his cheek. Nay, often he begged me to let him  
Forth from the horse, and ever he handled the hilt of his broadsword,  
Handled his bronze-shod lance, in his longing to harry the Trojans.  
Then, when we captured and plundered the steep-walled city of Priam,  
Bearing a share right gallant of spoil he returned to his vessel  
All unscathed, not smitten at all by the edge of a spear-blade,  
Neither in close hand-fight was he wounded—and such a misfortune  
Often befalleth in war, where blind is the fury of Ares.'  
So did I speak ; and the soul of the swift Pelean Achilles  
Stalked with gigantic strides to and fro on the asphodel meadow,  
Proudly exultant to hear of his son and his glory in warfare.

Then did the rest of the souls of the dead that from earth had departed  
Throng lamenting around me, and each asked after his dearest.

Only apart did the shade of the great Telamonian Ajax  
Stand far off, in his wrath, and alone—by the victory angered  
Which erstwhile I had won in my suit by the ships of the Argives,  
Claiming the arms of Achilles, the prize that his mother the goddess  
Placed at award of the sons of the Trojans and Pallas Athene.  
Would I had never prevailed and won such prize in the contest,  
Since that by reason thereof such head in the earth lies covered,  
Ajax—in beauty of form and in deeds all others excelling,  
All of the Danaan chiefs save only the peerless Achilles.

Therefore thus I addressed him with gentlest words of persuasion :  
‘Ajax, brave old Telamon’s son, wilt thou never be able  
Even in death such wrath to forget at the thought of the armour ?  
Curse on it !—Sure by the gods it was sent as a plague to the Argives.  
Ah, what a tower is fallen with thee ! yea, all the Achaeans,  
E’en as we mourned for the life of the great Pelean Achilles,  
Mourn unceasing for thee. Nor truly thereof is another  
Guilty but Zeus—for he pours on the host of the Danaan spearmen  
Measureless hate ; and on thee he hath laid this doom and destruction.  
Nay, come hither, my lord ! Come, list to my words and allow me  
All to relate—O conquer the wrath and the pride of thy spirit !’  
Thus did I speak, but he answered me nothing and followed the others  
Downward to Erebus—souls of the dead that from earth had departed.  
Yet, though angered, he sure had addressed me, or I had addressed him,  
Had not my heart been fain in the depth of the bosom within me  
Others to see of the souls of the dead that from earth had departed.

Minos then I beheld, illustrious son of the Father,  
Bearing a sceptre of gold, to the dead dispensing his judgments,  
Seated ; and thronging the throne of the king they awaited the verdicts,  
Sitting or standing anigh in the wide-door’d mansion of Hades.

Next came looming in sight the enormous giant Orion  
Driving together the beasts of the chase on the asphodel meadow,  
Even the beasts he had hunted of yore on the desolate mountains,  
Bearing a club in his hand all-bronzen and alway unbroken.

Tityos too I beheld, huge offspring of glorious Gaia,  
Lying outstretched on a plain. Nine roods with his body he covered.  
Squatting at both of his sides was a vulture that tore at his liver,

(1) 1, 1586 1/2 Plunging its beak in his caul; and his hands knew nought to defend him.  
(2) 1, 1587 1/2 Ay, for he ravished the mistress of Zeus, illustrious Leto,  
(3) 1, 1588 1/2 Whilst through Pánopes' beautiful lawns she was coming to Pytho.

There did I Tantalus also behold in his terrible torments,  
Fixed in a lake; and as high as his chin reached nearly the water.  
Tortured by thirst he appeared, but to taste one drop was unable,  
Since whenever the old man stooped in his longing for water  
Ever it withered away, sucked down, while where he was standing  
Ever the black earth showed; and this ebb was the work of a demon.  
Trees too, loftily-leaved, their fruits suspended above him:  
Pears were there and pomegranates and apples with glittering fruitage,  
Figs with their rich sweet harvest and growth of luxuriant olives.  
These, whenever the old man straightened him upward to clutch them,  
Off to the shadowy clouds were carried away by a whirlwind.

There did I Sisyphus also behold in his travail and torments,  
Heaving with both of his hands the enormous mass of a boulder;  
Ay, with his hands and his feet he was heaving and pushing it ever  
Up to the crest of a hill; then, ever again, at the moment  
Ere he surmounted the height, by the weight o'ermastering conquered  
Back to the valley below it rebounded, the pitiless boulder.  
Then once more he began with the heaving and straining, his members  
Streaming with sweat, while over his head hung eddying dust-clouds.

Then in his might I beheld huge Hercules, phantom terrific—  
Phantom I say, for the hero himself is among the immortals  
Joying in feasts, and is wedded to Hebe of beautiful ankles,  
Daughter of Hera with sandals of gold and of Zeus the Almighty.  
Round him a clamour arose of the dead, who to this and to that side  
Fluttered affrighted as birds; and like to the darkness of midnight,  
Holding his uncased bow in his hand and a shaft on the bowstring,  
Terribly peering he stood, as a man that is ready for shooting.  
Terrible too, engirding him round on the breast, was the baldrick.  
Fashioned of gold was the belt, and with wondrous things it was pictured:  
Bears and boars of the wold and lions savagely glaring,  
Turmoil of war and the slaying of men and battle and bloodshed.  
Whoso fashioned this thing, nought else let him fashion for ever,  
Since this belt by his skill he hath set in the store of his treasures!  
Me did he straightway know so soon as his eyes had perceived me;  
Then with a pitiful wail these swift-winged words he addressed me:



‘Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus—  
Ah poor mortal ! for surely a life ill-fated thou leadeſt,  
Such as the life that was mine to endure once under the ſunlight.  
Son of Cronion, of Zeus the Almighty, was I—but affliction  
Ever-unending I knew, to a wight far weaker than I was  
Bound as a thrall ; and in ſooth right grievous the labours he ſet me.  
Yea, e’en hither he ſent me to fetch him the Dog—and another  
Labour than this did he never deviſe that I found to be harder.  
Him natheleſs did I capture and drag from the palace of Hades,  
Hermes ſpeeding my queſt and the grey-eyed goddeſs Athene.’

‘Theſe words uttered, the ſpirit re-entered the manſion of Hades,  
While on the ſpot I remained, ſtill ſteadfaſtly waiting for other  
Hero-chiefs to approach that in bygone ages had periſhed.  
Yea and I ſurely had ſeen ſuch heroes of old that I longed for,  
Theſeus and Peirithoüs, thoſe glorious ſons of immortals ;  
Now, howbeit, had gathered the myriad hoſts of the phantoms  
Raiſing a wondrous cry, and a pale cold terror poſſeſſed me,  
Leſt might come that terrible monſter, the head of the Gorgon,  
Sent from the nether abyſs by the dread Queen Perſephoneia.  
Therefore ſtraight to the ſhip I returned, and I bade my companions  
Into the veſſel to mount and to looſe from the mooring the cable.  
All then quickly embarked and took their ſeats on the benches.  
Downward ſhe ſped on the river of Ocean’s billowy current,  
Firſtly by rowing, but later was borne by a favouring ſtern-wind.





# ODYSSEY BOOK XII

**N**OW when at last she had traversed the stream of the river of Ocean,  
Reaching the wide-way'd sea and its surging expanses, the vessel  
Soon was arrived at the island Aeaea (the fair-tressed Morning's  
Dwelling is here and her dancing-ground, and the home of the sunrise).  
Here when we came, uphauling the ship on the sands of the sea-shore,  
Out of her all of us stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean,  
Laid us to rest and awaited the light of the sacred morning.  
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Straight did I send forth some of my mates to the palace of Circe  
Bidding them bring me the body of him who had died, Elpenor.  
Forthwith cutting us logs, where highmost jutted a foreland,  
Him lamenting we buried, outpouring tears in abundance.  
Then, when the dead man's body was burned and the arms of the dead man,  
Piling a barrow we dragged to the summit a pillar and reared it ;  
Also his well-shaped oar on the top of the mound we erected.  
Thus then all of the rites we fulfilled, nor remained it to Circe  
Hidden that back we had come from the mansion of Hades, and quickly  
Donning her robes she arrived, and her handmaids followed behind her  
Bringing us bread and abundance of flesh and glittering red wine.  
Then, as she stood in their midst, addressed us the beautiful goddess :  
' Desperate ones, thus living to enter the mansion of Hades !  
Twice consenting to die, though once is the lot of a mortal !  
Come now, feast ye on food meantime and quaff of the wine-cup,  
Here remaining the whole of the day, but when morning appeareth,  
Then shall ye sail ; and the way will I show you, and every danger  
Clearly explain, lest ever by evil devices of malice  
Either on sea or on land misfortune and sorrow befall you.'  
So did she speak, and within us the valiant soul was persuaded.

Here then all of the day till the sun went down in the ocean  
Sat we and feasted on flesh in abundance and quaffed of the wine-cup,  
Till, when the sun sank down and come was the gloom of the twilight,  
While by the side of the moorings my shipmates laid them to slumber,  
Taking my hand she withdrew me apart from my trusty companions,  
Pray'd me to sit and reclined her beside me and questioned me closely.  
So I began with my story, and all things duly related.

Then, as I ended, in answer the beautiful goddess addressed me :

‘Thus now all of this matter is happily ended ; but listen !  
More I shall tell thee—and heaven thereof right oft will remind thee.  
Unto the Sirens first shalt thou come, whose song of enchantment  
Every mortal bewitches who heedlessly draweth anigh them.  
Whosoever in folly approaching anigh to the Sirens  
Heareth their singing, his wife and his infant children will never  
Stand at his side and exult as they welcome him back to the homeland ;  
No—for the Sirens soon with their soft sweet singing bewitch him.  
Sitting amidst of a meadow they sing—all round in a great pile  
Bodies decaying, and bones with the skin still shrivelling on them.  
Steer thou steadily past, nor forget in the ears of thy comrades  
Wax honey-sweet soft-kneaded to smear, lest any shall hearken,  
Any of all of the others ; but beest thou wishful to listen,  
Bid them to bind thee by hand and by foot in the swift-winged vessel,  
Set thee erect on the thwart and lash thee with ropes to the mast-tree.  
Thus shalt thou listen, enrapt with delight, to the song of the Sirens ;  
Ay and the more thou beseechest and biddest thy mates to release thee  
Ever the more it is need that with fetters they fasten thee firmly.  
Now when thy mates have driven the vessel in safety beyond them,  
Verily then for the rest nought certain and clear can I tell thee  
Which of the ways of return shall be thine. In the depths of thy bosom  
Question thy heart for advice. But of both of the ways will I tell thee.

First, on the one side beetle precipitous crags, and around them  
Thunder the rollers enormous of blue-eyed Amphitrite.  
“ Wandering Rocks ” is the name they are given by blessed immortals.  
This way passeth not even a bird—nay, even the pigeons,  
Timorous doves that to Zeus our Father ambrosia carry,  
Even of these one oft will be caught by the slippery rock-wall ;  
Then will another be sent by the Sire to replenish the number :  
This way never escapeth a vessel of men that arrives here ;  
Mingled together is wreckage of vessels with bodies of mortals  
Tossed on the billows of brine by the fury of fiery whirlwinds.  
Sole this voyage hath made, of the ships which fare on the ocean,  
Argo ever-renowned, as she sailed from the land of *Acētes*.  
Ay and the *Argo* too on the huge crags surely had driven  
Save for the guidance of *Hera*, who showed such favour to *Jason*.

Then, on the second path, twain rocks : one reacheth to heaven  
Lifting a sharp-peaked crest, and a cloud aye hangeth around it  
Blue-black, never receding—nor ever the cloudless aether

Lieth about this peak in the season of summer and autumn,  
Nor might ever a mortal ascend it or ever descend it,  
Nay not e'en if his hands and his feet were twenty in number,  
Such is the slippery smoothness thereof, as of stone that is polished.  
Right in the midst of the rock there gapeth a shadowy cavern,  
Turned to the gloom of the west—t'ward Erebus—even the quarter  
Whither the hollow ship ye shall steer, O noble Odysseus.  
Never a man in the prime of his strength from his hollow vessel  
Launching a shaft from a bow could reach to the mouth of the cavern.  
Here inhabiteth Scylla, a howling and horrible monster.  
Like to the voice of a whelp new-born doth the sound of her yelping  
Rise to the ear; but her form is a sight portentous, that no one  
E'er would gladly behold, not even a god, if he met her.  
Round her a dozen of feet she is always waving suspended,  
Six long sinuous necks outstretching before her, and each one  
Beareth a head terrific with teeth in a threefold order  
Many and thickly arrayed, where gapes death's cavernous blackness.  
Up to the midmost parts she is hid in the depth of the cavern,  
Whilst from her lair in the fearful abyss six heads she extendeth  
Hunting for fish at the foot of the rock and peering around it,  
Dolphins to catch or dogfish, or haply another and greater  
Beast of the droves unnumbered of deep-voiced Amphitrite.  
This way never hath crew been able to boast that uninjured  
Past they had flown in a ship, since every head of the monster  
Seizeth and beareth away one man from the blue-prowed vessel.

Now for the second rock—it is lower to look at, Odysseus;  
Nigh to the other it lies; 'twere easy to reach with an arrow.  
Growing thereon is a fig-tree tall with luxuriant leafage.  
'Neath it the deep black water is swallowed by mighty Charybdis.  
Thrice in the day doth she swallow it down and thrice she rejects it—  
Terrible! May'st thou be never anigh when she swallows the water!  
None might succour thee then from thy fate, not even Poseidon.  
Steer thou to Scylla's rock, and swiftly approaching anigh it  
Hastily pass in thy ship; since surely by far it is better  
Six of thy mates to bewail than that all of them perish together.'

Thus did she speak; forthwith then answering thus I addressed her:  
'Come now, tell me the truth, O goddess, and plainly declare it!  
Could I perchance somewise, escaping the deadly Charybdis,  
Hold me the other at bay when she fain would ravish my comrades?'

*Odyssey* Thus did I speak ; and at once thus answered the beautiful goddess :

*All* ' Desperate one ! lo, ever again thou'rt dreaming of battles,  
*115-153* Dreaming of toil ! Willst ne'er to the gods immortal submit thee ?  
Nowise mortal, believe me, is she, but a horror immortal—  
Terrible, irresistible, savage, invincible monster !  
Courage availeth thee nothing ; to flee her is best and is bravest.  
Shouldst thou delay at the side of her rock and with armour equip thee,  
Much do I fear that anew may issue forth to assail thee  
All of the heads, and again upsnap six more of thy comrades.  
Row at thy utmost speed, and call on the name of Crataïs,  
Mother of Scylla—the dam which littered this terror for mortals.  
She will prevent that anew she shall issue forth of the cavern.

Isle Thrinacia next thou shalt reach, where pasture in numbers  
Cattle of Eëlios and the fat-fed flocks of the sun-god—  
Seven the droves of the kine and seven of fair-fleeced fatlings,  
Fifty in every flock. 'Tis a race that has never an offspring,  
Nor do they dwindle and die ; and goddesses lead them to pasture,  
Fair-haired Lampetië and her sister, the nymph Phaëthusa,  
Daughters of lovely Neaera and Eëlios Hyperion.  
Now so soon as the goddess had borne and had nurtured her daughters,  
Then did she send them to dwell in the far Thrinacian island,  
Over the crook-horned cattle to watch and the flocks of their father.  
These if ye leave unharmed and earnestly press on your journey  
Verily Ithaca still shall ye reach, though suffering sorely ;  
Them if ye injure at all, I predict then utter destruction  
Both for thy ship and thy mates, whilst thou, though haply escaping,  
Late and in pitiful plight shalt arrive, no comrade surviving.'

While she was speaking the Morning appeared, enthroned in her glory.  
Then to the island again she departed, the beautiful goddess,  
While to the vessel returning I urgently bade my companions  
Haste to embark on the ship and to loose from the mooring the cable.  
All then quickly embarked and taking their seats on the benches  
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.  
Following after us then in the wake of the blue-prowed vessel  
Fair stern-breezes arose, sail-swelling and kindly companions,  
Sent by the fair-tressed nymph, dread goddess voiced as a mortal.  
So, when the gear of the ship we had busily stowed and adjusted,  
Seated we watched, while straight she was kept by the wind and the steersman.  
Then at the last with a heart right heavy I spake to my comrades :

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THE SIRENS





‘ Friends, as it never is seemly that one or that two of us only  
Learn the prophetic sayings of Circe, the beautiful goddess,  
Now will I speak, that ye know it beforehand, whether we perish,  
Or peradventure evade our doom and escape from destruction.  
Firstly she bade us beware of the wiles of the wonderful Sirens,  
Bade us escape from the song that they sing in their flowery meadow.  
Only myself she alloweth to listen—and me shall ye, shipmates,  
Binding with difficult bonds that shall keep me immovably fixed there,  
Set me erect on the thwart, and lash me with ropes to the mast-tree ;  
Ay and the more I beseech you, my comrades, and bid you release me,  
Ever the more is it need that with fetters ye fasten me firmly.’  
Thus then speaking the whole of the thing to my mates I imparted.  
Meantime speedily ever the well-built ship was approaching  
Near to the Sirens’ isle, borne on by a favouring stern-wind.  
Then of a sudden abated the wind, and it ceased, and a calm spread  
Breathless around—some deity lulling the surges to slumber.  
Swiftly the men sprang up on their feet and furling the canvas  
Stowed it away in the hold of the vessel, and then on the benches  
Sat them adown and whitened the water with polished pine-blades.  
Then with an axe I discovered a wheel right heavy of beeswax,  
Cutting it small ; and the pieces with sinewy fingers I kneaded.  
Quickly the wax grew soft, constrained by the pressure, and also  
Warmed by the rays of the sun, King Eëlios Hyperion.  
Then in the ears of my mates, one after the other, I smeared it.  
These too, binding together my hands and my feet in the vessel,  
Set me erect on the thwart and lashed me with ropes to the mast-tree ;  
Seated them then and smote on the grey-green brine of the ocean.

Thus then, distant as far as the voice of a shouter will carry,  
Swiftly we passed ; but they failed not the fleet-paced vessel to notice  
Speeding anigh them, and so they began their soft sweet singing :  
‘ Come to us, famous Odysseus, thou glory of all the Achaeans,  
Stay but a moment the vessel and list to the song that we sing thee !  
Never hath earth-born man passed here in his black-hulled vessel  
Ere he hath listened to music of voices as sweet as the honey.  
Here doth he taste of delight and fuller of knowledge he fareth,  
Since that we all things know—what befell on the plain of the Troad—  
All that was sent by the will of the gods to the Trojans and Argives,  
Yea and whatever shall hap on the earth, which nourisheth all things.’  
Thus did they call as they sang with a beautiful voice, and within me  
Fain was the heart to obey, and to loose me I ordered my comrades,

*Odyssey* Frowning and nodding—but forward they bent them incessantly rowing,  
XII Whilst rose Eurylochus, rose also his mate Perimedes,  
97-100 Bound me with bonds still more and with cordage fettered me firmly.  
Then, so soon we had gotten us further, nor heard in the distance  
Longer was sound of the words or the voice of the song of the Sirens,  
Quickly my well-loved mates from their ears unloosened the beeswax  
Which I had smeared them withal, and out of my bonds they released me.

Now no sooner the island was dropping behind us when straightway  
Smoke and a monstrous wave I beheld and was ware of a thunder.  
Then went flying in panic the oars from the hands of the rowers;  
Down in the swirl of the water they fell with a splash, and the ship stood  
Still, for the hands of the men ceased plying the tapering oar-blades.  
So to the midst of the vessel I passed and exhorted my comrades,  
Standing in turn near each, and with words consoling addressed them :  
' Courage, my friends ! ere now we have learnt us the lesson of danger ;  
Nor is a greater disaster before us than once was the Cyclops,  
While with his masterful might in his hollow cavern he penned us ;  
Natheless even from there by my valour and counsel and forethought  
Found we escape, and I ween this too shall we live to remember.  
Come now, list to the counsel I give, that we all may obey it.  
Ye, O mates, with the oars on the salt sea's mountainous surges  
Smite as ye sit on the benches—if Zeus peradventure will help us,  
Granting us now to evade this doom and safely escape it.  
Thee, O pilot, I charge—and these commands in thy spirit  
Ponder—for thou art in charge of the helm of the hollow vessel—  
Clear of the smoke take care and clear of the rollers to keep her ;  
Steer right close to the rocks, and be watchful in fear she elude thee  
Thitherward darting aside, and thou hurl us all to destruction.'

Thus did I speak, and hearing my words all quickly obeyed me.  
Scylla, resistless monster—of her still nothing I told them,  
Lest peradventure the men, when they heard it, by fear overmastered,  
Ceasing to row might crowd to the hold of the vessel to hide them.  
Now was the moment at hand when Circe's grievous injunction  
Clean I forgot; for to arm me at all she had straitly forbidden.  
Thus then, clad in my armour renowned, with a couple of lances,  
Long ones, grasped in my hands, by the foremost deck I ascended  
On to the prow, since thence I expected her first to be sighted,  
Scylla, who haunted the rock and was bringing their doom on my comrades.  
Natheless nought was I able to spy, and weary mine eyes grew

Peering intently around at the crags half hidden in vapour.

*Odyssey*

*XII*

*Book XII*

Thus then into the narrows we entered with pitiful groaning.  
Scylla on one side lay, on the other the mighty Charybdis  
Swallowing down with a force terrific the salt sea water.  
Now whensoever she vomited forth, as a pot on a furnace  
Out of the depths all swirling and seething she rose, and above her  
Mounted the spray, and on both of the peaks of the rock it descended.  
Then, whensoever she swallowed the flood of the salt sea water,  
Down to the depths all seething she opened, and round her the rock-wall  
Terribly bellowed, and right at the bottom the gaping abyss showed  
Blue-black sands ; and the men were seized by a pale cold terror.  
Whilst now thither we fixed our gaze, foreboding destruction,  
Out of the midst of my men in the hollow vessel did Scylla  
Six snap—bravest of all in the fight, and in body the strongest.  
Then, as again to the vessel I turned and looked for my comrades,  
All I beheld was the hands and the feet of the men as they struggled  
High in the air ; and I heard their voices appealing for succour,  
Vainly invoking my name in the last dread moment of anguish.  
E'en as a fisher who stands with his tapering rod on a foreland  
Casts on the water his baits as a lure for the tinier fishes,  
Then in the deep down-droppeth his line with a sheathing of ox-horn ;  
Even as writheth the fish when he catcheth and flingeth it landward,  
Thus did they writhe as she caught them and bore them aloft to her cavern.  
Here, at the mouth of the cave, she devoured them horribly shrieking,  
Still extending to me their hands in their dread death-struggle :  
Sight most woeful of all that mine eyes have ever beholden,  
All of the woes that I suffered exploring the paths of the ocean !

Thus then, after evading the Rocks and fearful Charybdis,  
Scylla we also escaped, and the god's inviolate island  
Soon with the vessel we reached. Here pasture the beautiful broad-browed  
Cattle and many a flock of the sun-god, King Hyperion.  
Now whilst still in my black-hulled vessel afloat on the ocean  
Lowing I heard, as of kine to the stalls of the cattle returning,  
Mingled with bleating of sheep. Then fell on my mind the monition  
Given by Teiresias, old sightless prophet of Thebae,  
Ay and by Circe of Aea ; for both most urgently bade me  
Keep well wide of the isle of the Sun who gladdeneth mortals.  
So with a heart right heavy I turned to my mates and addressed them :  
'Listen, I pray, to my words, though suffering sorely, my comrades !

*Odyssey* List to the warnings prophetic of Teiresias the diviner,  
*XII* Ay and of Circe of Aea—for both most urgently bade me  
*873 - 879* Keep well wide of the isle of the Sun who gladdeneth mortals,  
Saying that here was awaiting us surely a dreadful disaster.  
Row, then, row ! and the good black ship keep clear of the island.'

Thus did I speak ; but the hearts of the men were broken within them.  
Straightway Eurylochus with a word disconsolate answered :  
'Cruel I call thee, Odysseus ! Immense is thy strength and thy body  
Never is weary. By heav'n, thou'rt fashioned wholly of iron,  
Thus forbidding thy mates, o'er mastered by toil and by slumber,  
Out of the vessel to land—though here 'twere possible straightway,  
Here on this sea-girt island, a meal right pleasant to make us—  
Urging us on like this in the rapidly gathering darkness  
Blindly to wander afar from the land on the mist-bound ocean !  
Out of the darkness too are tempests, wreckers of vessels,  
Wont to arise. How could we escape then sudden destruction,  
Should peradventure arise unexpected the blast of a storm-wind,  
Either the South or the West, whose rage all other exceeding  
Shattereth vessels in spite of the will of the Rulers of heaven ?  
Nay come, hear me, I pray—no longer defying the darkness,  
Let us a supper prepare, by the swift-winged vessel remaining,  
Then embarking at dawn launch forth on the plain of the ocean !'  
Thus spake Eurylochus, and all of the others assented.  
Forthwith then I perceived some deity plotted us evil ;  
Therefore upraising my voice these swift-winged words I addressed him :  
'Eurylochus, I am truly unable alone to resist you—  
Yet come all, I beseech you, and swear me by all that is sacred,  
Should we perchance on a number of sheep or of cattle at pasture  
Hap to alight, ye will never in wanton infatuate folly  
Slaughter a cow nor even a sheep, but in quiet contentment  
Eat the provisions ye got as a present from Circe the goddess.'

Thus did I speak ; forthwith all sware to refrain, as I bade them.  
So when at length they had given the oath and finished the plighting,  
Finding a hollow haven, the well-built vessel we stranded  
Nigh to a freshet of water, and straightway stept my companions  
Out of the vessel, and soon right deftly prepared was the supper.  
Then when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Forthwith calling to mind their well-loved mates they bewailed them,  
Those whom Scylla had snapt from the hollow vessel and eaten.

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Thus as they wept and wailed fell soothing slumber upon them,  
Till, at the tierce of the night, when the stars were passed to their setting,  
Sudden a squall swept down from the Father who gathers the tempests  
Bursting with terrible blast ; all covered over with storm-rack  
Earth was at once and the sea ; and down from the sky fell midnight.  
Then when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Into a hollow cavern we dragged our vessel and moored her.  
Here were beautiful dancing-grounds and seats of the sea-nymphs.  
Forthwith calling a council of all, these words I addressed them :  
' Friends, in the swift-winged ship is provision for eating and drinking ;  
Therefore keep we afar from the kine lest evil befall us.  
Dread is the god whose cattle and fat-fed flocks we shall find here,  
Æolios, who all overseeth and all overheareth.'

Thus did I speak, and within them the valiant soul was persuaded.  
Then for a month unceasing the South Wind blew, nor another  
Ever arose meantime save only the East and the South Wind.  
Whilst now still we possessed a provision of corn and of red wine  
Ever for love of their lives all kept them away from the cattle,  
Till, when at last consumed in the vessel was all of the grain-store,  
Often in questings for game would want constrain them to wander,  
Catching with well-bent hooks both birds and fishes—whatever  
Came to the hands of the men—since famine gnawed at their belly.

Now on a day I departed and mounted the island, to offer  
Prayer to the gods, should any reveal me a way of returning.  
So, when at last I had mounted the isle and avoided my comrades,  
Cleansing with water my hands, where 'gainst all winds was a covert,  
All the immortals with vows I invoked who inhabit Olympus.  
Straight, as an answer they poured a delicious sleep on my eyelids.  
Meanwhile Eurylochos ill counsels gave to his shipmates :  
' Listen, I pray, to my words, though suffering sorely, my comrades !  
Every manner of death for unfortunate mortals is hateful ;  
Death most hateful is this—to be doomed through hunger to perish.  
Come, let us forth, and catching the best of the kine of the sun-god  
Offerings make to the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven.  
Yea and if haply at last we arrive at the Ithacan homeland,  
Then to the god of the sun, Hyperion, a rich-wrought temple  
Straight will we rear, and adorn it with gifts full many and precious.  
Nay, if he even, in wrath maybe for his straight-horned cattle,  
Strive to destroy our vessel, and other immortals abet him,

Sooner with one last gulp at a wave will I sink to the bottom  
Rather than thus stay starving to death on a desolate island.'

Thus spake Eurylochus, and all of the others assented.  
Straight they uprose and they lifted the best of the kine of the sun-god,  
Going not far; for anigh to the blue-prow'd vessel they found them  
Feeding—the shambling kine—those beautiful broad-brow'd cattle.  
Then in a circle surrounding the beasts they invoked the immortals,  
Plucking the soft green leaves of the oak which spreadeth to heaven,  
Since white groats no longer remained in the well-decked vessel.  
Now so soon they had prayed and had slaughtered the cattle and flayed them,  
Cutting the thigh-piece out of the thigh they enwrapped it in caul-fat,  
Making it double, and laid at the top raw chunks of the carcass.  
Wine moreover was wanting to pour on the burning oblation,  
Wherefore making libation with water they roasted the entrails.  
Then, when the thighs were wholly consumed and the livers devoured,  
Slicing the rest of it smaller they spitted the pieces on skewers.

This was the season that sleep, long-brooding, fled from my eyelids.  
Straight to the swift-winged ship and the beach of the ocean I hastened,  
Till when at last I was come not far from the twy-beaked galley  
Then did a savour delicious of fat come floating around me,  
Which when I noticed I groaned, and I cried to the gods everlasting:  
'Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blessed,  
Verily now to my ruin ye lulled me in merciless slumber!  
Lo what a monstrous deed have plotted my mates in my absence!'

Swift to the god of the sun, Hyperion, as messenger hasted  
Long-robed Lampetië, to report we had slaughtered the cattle.  
Straight mid the gods everlasting he spake, fierce wrath in his bosom:  
'Father Zeus, and ye other immortals eternally blessed,  
See that ye punish the men of Odysseus the son of Laertes!  
Lo, with an insolence rare they have slaughtered the cattle wherein I  
Ever rejoiced as I mounted the starry expanse of the heaven,  
Ever as back to the earth I returned, from the heaven descending.  
Should they refuse for my cattle to pay me a seemly atonement,  
Into the darkness of Hades I'll set and shine for the dead there.'  
Him then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the tempests:  
'God of the sun, shine here in the heaven amidst the immortals,  
Ay and for men that be mortal on earth, rich giver of harvests!  
Touching this crew—their ship with the blinding bolt of my thunder

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Smiting I'll shatter asunder amidst of the wine-dark ocean.'

*Odyssey*

XII

All these things did I hear from the fair-tressed goddess Calypso ;  
She from the Messenger God, Hermeias, said she had heard them.

Now when at last I was come to the ship and the shore of the ocean,  
Each man after the other in turn I upbraided ; but nowise  
Found we a means to amend it. The cows were slaughtered already.  
Ay and the gods forthwith sent monstrous marvels to scare us—  
Skins beginning to crawl and the meat that was spitted to bellow,  
Roasted as well as the raw ; and a lowing arose as of cattle.

So six livelong days hereafter my faithful companions  
Fed on the spoil they had taken—the best of the cows of the sun-god,  
Till, when a seventh was sent by the Father of heaven, Cronion,  
Then at the last ceased raging the wind with its violent storm-blasts.  
Speedily therefore embarking we launched on the plain of the ocean,  
Hoisted the mast and the white sails lifted aloft to the breezes.

Now no sooner the island was dropping behind us, nor any  
Other land was in sight, but the heaven alone and the ocean,  
Then was a blue-black cloud commanded to halt by Cronion  
Over the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep sea darkened ;  
Nor much longer she ran on her course ; of a sudden upon her  
Shouting the West swept down with the might of a furious tempest.  
Smit by the blast of the whirlwind the foremost stays of the mast snapt,  
Both of them ; backward the mast fell down and the whole of the rigging  
Dropped to the hold in a heap ; at the stern of the vessel the topmast  
Crashed from aloft on the head of the pilot and shattered in pieces  
Every bone of the skull ; and he headlong, like to a diver,  
Plunged from the poop, and the valiant soul from the body departed.  
Zeus at that instant thundered and lightning hurled at the vessel.  
Struck by the bolt of the Father she shook all over and staggered,  
Filled with a sulphurous flame. From the ship fell all of my comrades,  
Then on the waves like gulls by the side of the black-hulled vessel  
Floated and tossed ; and the god thus ended their hope of the homeland.

Still was I pacing the deck of the ship when a billow enormous  
Parted her sides from the keel, which swept on bare of the tackle.  
Close to the keel clean snapt was the mast-tree lying, and round it  
Lashed to it loosely was hanging a backstay, fashioned of ox-hide.



*Odyssey* Herewith firmly I fastened together the keel and the mast-tree,  
XII Seated whereon I was carried along by the terrible tempest.

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Now, when the West had abated the rage of its furious storm-blasts,  
Swiftly arising the South swooped down, and it tortured my spirit  
Lest it again might carry me back to the deadly Charybdis.  
All night long was I borne by the wind ; at the season of sunrise  
Close to the cavern of Scylla I came and to dreadful Charybdis.  
E'en at this moment she yawned and swallowed the salt sea water.  
Then with an upward leap did I clutch at the long-branched fig-tree,  
Clinging to which as a bat suspended I hung, nor was any  
Hold for the feet to support me below or for clambering upward.  
Much too far were growing the roots ; and the branches in mid-air,  
Mighty and long, outstretching them far, o'ershadowed Charybdis.  
Steadfastly ever I clung, expecting the vortex to vomit  
Back to the surface the mast and the keel—and they came ; but I waited  
Long. At the time when a man for his supper doth rise at the council,  
One who decideth the quarrels of youths appealing for judgment,  
Such was the hour when the wreckage appeared from the depths of Charybdis.  
Then, unloosing my hands and my feet, as a plummet I dropt down  
Into the midst of the sea at the side of the great long mast-tree,  
Mounted whereon with my hands then steadily forward I paddled.  
Scylla I saw no more, for the Father of men and immortals  
Suffered it not—else sure I had fallen on utter destruction.

Thence nine days was I borne. On the tenth in the darkness of midnight  
Nigh th' Ogygian isle was I brought, where goddess Calypso  
Dwelleth—a fair-tressed nymph, dread deity voiced as a mortal.  
Me she received and cherished—but wherefore tell I the story ?  
All of it yester-e'en in the hall of thy home I related  
Unto thy gracious queen and thyself ; nor pleasing I hold it  
Over again narrating a tale once fully related."

# ODYSSEY BOOK XIII

**T**HUS did he end ; and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,  
Holden as 'twere by a spell in the shadowy hall of the palace.  
Then King Alcinous outspake and in answer addressed him :  
“ Since now under the roof of my bronze-floored palace, Odysseus,  
Safe thou art come, thou'lt never, methinks, go wandering further,  
Ere to thy home thou return'st, however to hardship accustomed.  
Now to you all and to each I announce this further injunction,  
Each who is wont to partake of the glowing wine of the elders  
Here in my banqueting-hall, and to list to the song of the minstrel :  
Lo, in a polished coffer the raiment received by the stranger  
Lieth, and fair things fashioned of gold, and the rest of the presents  
Which Phaeacian lords of the council collected together.  
Come, let us also present him a full-sized tripod and cauldron,  
Each of us ; then can we later, by making collection in public,  
Win us repayment ; 'tis hard when the one does favours for nothing.”  
Thus spake Alcinous and his speech was received with approval.  
Each one then to his homestead departed to lay him to slumber.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Quickly they brought to the vessel the bronze that rejoiceth a mortal ;  
This did the powerful chief, King Alcinous, on the vessel  
Going around stow under the benches away, to prevent it  
Hindering any that rowed when amain at his oar he was pulling.  
Then to the house of the king they betook them and set them a-feasting,  
After the powerful monarch had given an ox to be slaughtered  
Unto Cronion, the ruler of all, who dwells in the storm-cloud.  
So when the thighs they had burnt they partook of a glorious banquet,  
Making them merry, and harked to the strains of the godlike singer  
Demodocus, blind bard by the people beloved ; but Odysseus  
Ever and ever was turning his eyes to the sun in its splendour,  
Longing to hasten its setting, so eager he felt for departure.  
Even as years for his supper a man when his wine-red oxen  
All day long have tugged at a jointed plough in a fallow,  
E'en as he joys when he seeth the sun's light sink to the setting,  
So he can get to his food—and his knee-joints ache as he walketh—  
Thus did Odysseus rejoice when the sunlight sank to the setting.  
Suddenly then to the lovers of ships, Phaeacia's nobles,  
Chiefly to Alcinous these words addressing, he turned him :

"O King Alcinous, illustrious prince of the people,  
Pour ye libation and bid me farewell !—farewell to you also !  
Now it is all fulfilled as I wished in the depth of my bosom,  
Escort and loving gifts—May the gods celestial grant me  
Blessing therein ! May I come to my home, and my peerless consort  
There may I find still living and well, with the rest of my dear ones !  
Ye too, bide ye at home with your wedded wives and your children,  
Making them happy with love. May the gods prosperity grant you,  
Every kind, and all that is ill dwell far from the people."  
Thus did he speak, and they all assented and made resolution  
Homeward the stranger to help, since duly and well he had spoken.  
Then did the powerful king to his henchman turn and address him :  
"Pontonoius, come mix strong wine and serve us a bumper,  
Plenty for all at the feast, that a prayer we may raise to the Father,  
Ere we shall send our guest on his way to his distant homeland."  
Thus did he speak ; and a wine honey-hearted was mixed by the henchman ;  
Then to them all he dispensed it in turn ; and they made a libation  
Unto the blessed immortals who dwell in the infinite heaven,  
Pouring it there as they sat. Then rising, the godlike Odysseus  
Into the hands of the queen gave over his twy-cupped goblet,  
While uplifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed her :  
"Fare thee well, O queen, and be happy for ever, till lastly  
Age shall befall thee, and death, which cometh to every mortal.  
Now it is need that I go ; but do thou live joyfully alway  
Here in thy home with the monarch, thy lord, and thy children and people !"

These words said, stept over the threshold the godlike Odysseus,  
Having beside him the herald whom Alcinous had commanded  
Down to the shore of the sea and the swift-winged vessel to guide him.  
Also had Arete told three of her women to follow.  
One of them bare in her arms fresh raiment—a cloak and a doublet ;  
Then was a second commissioned to carry the strong-made coffer,  
While that the third had a burden of bread and of glittering red wine.  
So, when at last they had come to the sea and arrived at the vessel,  
Speedily then was it all by the high-born men of the escort  
Taken aboard and bestowed in the hold with the wine and the viands.  
Also they spread for Odysseus a rug and a wrapper of linen  
Nigh to the stern, on the deck of the hollow vessel, to lie there  
Soundly asleep ; and he mounted the ship and composed him to slumber  
Silently, while that the crew sat down on the benches in order,  
Each in his place ; and loosed from the mooring-stone was the hawser.



THE ARRIVAL AT ITHACA



Then, as they backward swung uptossing the brine with the oar-blades,  
Softly a sleep profound spread over his slumbering eyelids,  
Deep as a trance and surpassingly sweet—yea, death it resembled.

*Odyssey*

*XIII*

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Now did the vessel . . . as over a plain four stallion coursers  
Harnessed abreast, 'neath strokes of the lash, come thundering onward,  
Bounding aloft as they gallop apace their course to accomplish,  
So did the stern of the ship go bounding aloft—and behind it  
Mightily eddied the dark blue wave of the bellowing ocean.  
Steadily onward she flew ; not even the falcon that soareth,  
Swiftest of birds of the air, might vie with the ship in her swiftness ;  
So did she speed on her way, right easily cleaving the billows,  
Bearing a man who was like to the gods everlasting in wisdom,  
One who had suffered already in heart full many a sorrow,  
Tossed by the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean.  
Now he is sleeping in peace, forgetful of all that he suffered.

So when the star was on high that of all is the brightest, and oft-times  
Comes as the herald of light when the newborn day is arising,  
Voyaging over the waters the ship drew near to an island  
Where is a haven of Phorcys, the ancient god of the ocean.  
Here it is Ithacan land. Two capes jut forth from the coast-line,  
High precipitous cliffs but aslope to the verge of the harbour,  
Fending the monstrous surge of the rollers aroused by the storm-winds  
Out in the open ; but ever within unloosed from the cable  
Well-decked vessels can ride when they enter the bound of the roadstead.  
Now at the head of the haven a long-leaved olive is growing,  
Distant from which not far is a pleasant and shadowy grotto,  
Hallowed haunt of the nymphs who are known as the fountain naiads.  
Here in the depths of the cave are amphora vessels and wine-bowls  
Formed of the rock, and the bees hide here their treasures of honey ;  
Here stand, fashioned in stone, vast looms, where many a naiad  
Weaveth her robes of the deep-sea purple, a wonder to gaze at.  
Water perennial welleteth within. Two mouths hath the cavern ;  
One to the North Wind looks and is easy for mortals to enter,  
One to the South, and is more for the gods ; nor ever by this way  
Entereth any of human race ; 'tis a path for immortals.

Into the haven they rowed (they had known it before), and the vessel  
Ran on the beach : to the half of her length on the sand was she driven,  
Such was her speed, and such was the strength of the hands that impelled her.

*Odyssey* Out of the well-benched vessel when now they had stepped on the dry land,  
XIII First from the deck of the hollow ship uplifting Odysseus,  
116 - 134 E'en as he lay in the rug and the glistening wrapper of linen,  
Down on the sand of the shore, still heavy with slumber, they placed him.  
Then from the vessel they landed the gifts that the king and the nobles,  
Moved by the noble Athena, bestowed when for home he departed.  
These in a heap up-piling they left at the foot of the olive  
Somewhat aside from the path, lest any that saw it in passing,  
Ere that Odysseus awoke, might venture anigh and despoil him.  
These now homeward returned.

But the King Earth-shaking Poseidon  
Ne'er had forgotten the vows that he uttered when erst he had threatened  
Godlike Odysseus, and turning to Zeus he demanded his counsel:  
"Father Zeus! I can hope henceforth from the gods everlasting  
Little respect, since men that be mortal so little respect me,  
E'en Phaeacian folk—whose race from myself is descended.  
Lo, full many afflictions I vowed should fall on Odysseus  
Ere to his home he returned—though wholly to stay his returning  
Ne'er did I try from the moment thou gav'st thy consent and thy promise.  
Now these men have borne him asleep in a swift-winged vessel  
Over the sea and on Ithaca set him, and richly with presents  
Helped him—with bronze and with gold and abundance of woven apparel—  
Treasures so many as ne'er from the Trojans Odysseus had gained him  
Had he returned unscathed with his well-won share in the booty."  
Him forthwith gave answer the god who gathers the storm-clouds:  
"Lo now, what is this word, Earth-shaker and Ruler of ocean?  
Thee nowise dishonour the gods. 'Twere difficult truly  
Thee, who art eldest and best of us all, to assail with dishonour,  
While if a mortal, obeying his hardy and arrogant nature,  
Honours thee not, it is thine to avenge thee, or now or hereafter.  
Act as thou wilt—as it seems to be best to the spirit within thee!"  
Then did the King Earth-shaking Poseidon address him in answer:  
"Quickly enough had I done as thou say'st, O King of the storm-clouds,  
Had I not held thee in awe and dreaded arousing thy anger.  
Now I am minded to smite this fine Phaeacian vessel  
While from the convoy she homeward returns in the mist-bound ocean;  
Yea I will smite her and teach them to stop and to stay with their convoys.  
This will I do, and will whelm with the mass of a mountain the city."  
Him forthwith gave answer the god who gathers the storm-clouds:  
"Friend, as it seems to my mind, 'twere verily better and wiser,  
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Just at the moment when out of the city the whole of the people  
Watcheth her enter the harbour, to change her, anigh to the sea-shore,  
Into a rock with the form of a vessel, that ever hereafter  
Mortals shall wonder. Then whelm with the mass of a mountain the city !”

*Odysseus*

*At 11*

*11. 11*

Now when he heard this saying the King Earth-shaker Poseidon  
Went to the Scherian isle, where dwell Phaeacian people.  
Here he remained till anigh was the ship as she voyaged the ocean  
Rapidly speeding along ; then the King Earth-shaker, approaching,  
Suddenly changed her to stone and rooted her deep in the waters,  
Smiting with downward stroke of the hand ; and he turned and departed.  
Uttering swift-winged words then turned them the one to the other  
All of the Scherian folk—those famous oarsmen and sailors—  
Each man gazing the while at the man that was standing beside him :  
“ Ah me ! who is it fettered the swift ship fast on the ocean  
E’en as she entered the port ? Just now she was visible plainly.”  
Thus spake one to the other, but how it had happened they knew not.  
Then King Alcinous rose up in the midst and harangued them :  
“ Lo now, surely the doom prophetic is falling upon me  
Told by my sire, who was wont to proclaim that Poseidon was angered,  
Jealous because we unfailingly offer an escort to all men.  
‘ Some day ’—so did he speak—‘ as a fine Phaeacian vessel  
Over the mist-bound deep from a convoy returns shall the sea-god  
Smite her to pieces and whelm with the mass of a mountain the city.’  
Such was the rede of my sire, and it all finds now a fulfilment.  
Come now, hear what I say, and let all of us follow my counsel !  
Never again let us give such convoy, if wandering mortals  
Come to the city ; and now let us offer Poseidon atonement ;  
Twelve choice bulls let us slaughter in hope he may show us compassion,  
Neither in anger o’erwhelm with the mass of a mountain the city.”  
So did he speak, and in fear they prepared them the bulls for oblation.  
Thus then offering prayers to Poseidon, the king of the ocean,  
All of the best of the land, Phaeacia’s princes and leaders,  
Stood surrounding the altar.

And godlike Odysseus, awaking,  
Opened his eyes on the land of his birth, nor yet did he know it,  
Such long years had he wandered afar ; and around him the goddess  
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus, poured mist to conceal him,  
Keeping him hidden until she had given him counsel in all things,  
Lest that his wife might know him, or friends, or the men of the city,

Ere for transgression the suitors had paid complete satisfaction.  
Wherefore utterly strange was the land to the eyes of its master,  
All of the clambering paths and all of the sheltering havens,  
Lofty precipitous crags and the bloom of luxuriant forests.  
Hastily rising he stood and gazing around on his homeland  
Uttered a pitiful groan and on both of his thighs in despondence  
Smote with a downward stroke of the hands and made lamentation :  
“ Ah me, what is the folk whose country I now am arrived at ?  
Dwell here savages wanton and wild, despisers of justice ?  
Have they a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals ?  
Whither to carry my treasure I know not at all ; and myself too  
Where shall I turn me ? I would 'twere back in the Scherian island  
Just as it was ; and perchance I had found some powerful monarch  
Elsewhere, ready to grant me a welcome and give me an escort.  
Now I am truly in doubt to bestow it. I verily like not  
Leaving it here as a find and a welcome booty for others.  
Nay but in sooth not at all like lovers of wisdom and justice  
Acted, methinks, those high Phaeacian nobles and princes,  
Bringing me thus to a land unknown ; for they promised to bring me  
Unto the far-seen Ithacan isle, and the promise is broken.  
Zeus I beseech to requite it, the suppliant's god, who is watching  
Ever the deeds of mankind and punisheth every sinner.  
Well now, come, I will look to the presents and reckon the number ;  
Haply departing they took of the things on the hollow vessel.”  
These words said, he inspected the tripods and beautiful cauldrons,  
Numbering all, and the gold and the woven and exquisite garments.  
Nothing he missed of them all, and with joyless thoughts of his homeland  
Slowly he wandered along by the shore of the bellowing ocean  
Uttering many a moan.

Then approached him the goddess Athene  
Likened in form to a youth who tendeth the sheep on a pasture,  
Having a delicate beauty of mien, as the son of a chieftain ;  
Twofold over her shoulders a well-wrought mantle she carried ;  
Sandals she wore on her fair white feet, and a lance she was holding.  
Then as he saw her Odysseus rejoiced and advancing to meet her  
Lifted in welcome his voice, and with swift-winged words he addressed her :  
“ Friend, since thou art the first I have lighted upon in the country,  
Welcome !—for truly I hope that thou com'st with a friendly intention—  
Rescue this treasure of mine, and myself too ! Lo, I beseech thee  
Even as wert thou a god, at thy knees as a suppliant failing.

Also relate me the truth—for I fain would know it for certain :  
What is this land ? What people and natives dwell in the country ?  
One of the far-seen isles peradventure ? or one of the beaches  
Sloping adown to the sea on the fertile coast of the mainland ?”  
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“ Foolish thou seemst, O stranger, or else thou art come from a distance,  
Seeing thou askest the name of the land. So utterly nameless  
Sooth it is not. There’s many and many a mortal that knows it—  
Every mortal that dwells in the east, whence dawneth the sunrise,  
Every mortal behind in the west, where fadeth the daylight.  
Truly the island is rugged—not fit for the driving of horses—  
Still, not utterly poor, though lacking in open expanses.  
Corn in amazing abundance it groweth, and also the wine-grape  
Ripens, and ever with rain and with freshening dew it is moistened.  
Good is the isle as a pasture for goats and for kine, and it beareth  
Every manner of wood and hath watering-places that fail not.  
Therefore, stranger, hath Ithaca’s name reached even to Troyland,  
Though right far, it is said, ’tis away from the shores of Achaea.”

So did she speak, and it joyed long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
Yea he rejoiced in the land of his birth when he heard what she told him,  
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.  
Then uplifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed her ;  
Yet no truth did he speak, for he curbed it before it was uttered,  
Keeping, as ever, control of the mind right cunning within him :  
“ Ah yes, Ithaca’s name I have heard far over the ocean,  
E’en in the broad-spread island of Creta, from which I am come now,  
I and this treasure of mine ; and as much did I leave for my children,  
Flying the land ; for the son I had killed of a prince of the country,  
Orsilochus swift-footed, who conquered in fleetness of running  
Every mortal that liveth on bread in the isle of the Cretans.  
Him I had killed—for he wished to deprive me of all of my booty  
Gotten at Troy, in the winning whereof great toil I had suffered,  
Tossed on the billows of war and the grievous waves of the ocean—  
Wished it because I refused as attendant to follow his father  
There in the Trojan land, and had captained a band of my fellows.  
So with my bronze-shod spear I attacked him whenas he was coming  
Home from the fields, waylaying him close to the road with a comrade.  
Black was the night that enshrouded the heaven ; no mortal perceived us ;  
None was aware of the deed I had done when of life I bereft him.  
Now no sooner the man with my sharp-edged spear I had murdered,

*Odysseus* Straight to a ship I betook me of proud Phoenician sea-folk ;  
8/11 Them I entreated, and gave them of spoil that delighteth a mortal,  
10/11 Earnestly begging them take me aboard of the vessel and land me  
Either at Pylos or Elis the fair, where rule the Epeans.  
Thither to come howbeit withheld them the might of the storm-wind,  
Much as they wished it ; nor acted they willingly thus to deceive me.  
Out of the course thus driven, at night we arrived at this island.  
Toilfully rowing ahead to a harbour we came, and exhausted,  
Wholly forgetful of food, though needing sorely a supper,  
Stepped from the vessel and, just as we were, lay down on the sea-shore.  
Now when in slumber refreshing I sank outworn with my labours,  
Carrying all of my goods from the hollow vessel, they placed them  
Here at my side, where sleeping I lay on the sands of the sea-shore.  
Then, embarking again, for the flourishing city of Sidon  
Started, and here I am left with a heart that is heavy with trouble."

Thus had he spoken when, smiling, the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Touched him with gentle caress ; and she changed to the form of a woman  
Beautiful, stately, and gifted with deftness in exquisite handwork.  
Then uplifting her voice these swift-winged words she addressed him :  
"Truly a master in craft were one that excelled thee in cunning !  
Conquered in guile were e'en the immortal who happened to meet thee.  
Ah, thou audacious inventor of falsehood, insatiate trickster,  
Even at home, as it seemeth, thou mean'st not to cease from deceiving,  
Weaving thy fables, wherein from the ground of thy heart thou delightest.  
Come, let us speak no longer thereof ! We are both of us practised  
Weavers of wiles—for of all of mankind thou art easily foremost  
Both in thy counsels and speech, and amid the immortals I win me  
Fame for my wit and my wiles. Yet how didst thou fail to discern me,  
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus—that goddess who always  
Stands at thy side and defends thee in every hardship and danger,  
Ay and who gained thee the love and the favour of all the Phaeacians ?  
Now am I come that we two may take some counsel together,  
Also in safety to bring these gifts that the lordly Phaeacians  
Gave at thy homeward departing (for such was my will and intention),  
Yea and in order to tell thee of all thou art destined to suffer  
E'en in thy well-built home—So resign thee to fate and endure it !  
Nor do thou utter a word to a man of them all or a woman,  
Telling that home thou art come from thy wanderings. Suffer in silence !  
E'en though bitter the pain and deep the indignity, bear it !"

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Difficult ’twere for the mortal thou meetest, goddess, to know thee,  
Though right clever he were, for thou cloth’st thee in every semblance.  
This howbeit I know, that thou gavest me favour aforetime,  
While in the country of Troy were warring the sons of Achaea ;  
Yet, when at last we had plundered the steep-built city of Priam,  
After the Greeks had embarked on the ships and a god had dispersed them,  
Never again I beheld thee, thou daughter of Zeus, nor perceived thee  
Mounting aboard of my vessel in order to save me from sorrow.  
Cherishing deep in my bosom a heart that was stricken with anguish,  
Ever I wandered, until the immortals from evil released me,  
Even till thou thyself in the rich Phaeacian country  
Gavest me comforting words and didst show me the way in the city.  
Now in the name of the Father I beg thee to tell me—for never  
May I believe I am come to the far-seen Ithacan island ;  
Nay, in a foreign land I am roaming, and merely to mock me  
Thou art saying, and cheating my soul with an empty illusion—  
Tell me the truth ! Am I come to the dear-loved land of my fathers ?”  
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“Ever and alway the same suspicious thoughts in thy bosom !  
This is the reason I ne’er can desert thee in all thy affliction,  
Since thou art wary and ready of wit and surpassing in prudence.  
Gladly had many a man, thus safely returned from a far land,  
Hastened him home in the longing to look on his wife and his children ;  
Nowise such is thy wish—nor to listen and learn from another,  
Ere thou hast tested thy wife to the full ; but she sitteth, as alway,  
There in thy palace halls, and filled with the gloom of her sadness  
Waneth the day and waneth the night, while ever she weepeth.  
Truly I ne’er had a doubt—nay, deep in my spirit I knew it,  
Knew thy return was assured, though lost were all of thy comrades ;  
Yet was I all unwilling to strive with my father’s brother,  
Even Poseidon, who cherished at heart such anger against thee,  
Raging because of his well-loved son, whom thou retest of eyesight.  
Come now, look on the scene and assure thee ’tis Ithaca’s island !  
Here is the haven of Phorcys, the ancient god of the ocean !  
There, at the head of the harbour, a high-branch’d olive is growing,  
Distant from which not far is a pleasant shadowy grotto,  
Sacred haunt of the nymphs that are known as the fountain naiads ;  
There is the cave with its roof high-arched where often aforetime  
Unto the nymphs thou hast made full many a perfect oblation.  
There too, clothed in its forests, the mountain of Neriton riseth.”

*Odyssey* These words spoken, she scattered the mist and uncovered the landscape.

*XIII* Then exulted in joy long-suffering godlike Odysseus ;

*871-881* Yea he rejoiced and embracing the earth, dear mother of harvests,  
Uttered a prayer to the nymphs, uplifting his hands to the heaven :

‘ Fountain Naiads, ye daughters of Zeus, I had verily never  
Hoped to behold you again. With the vows of affection I greet you ;

Yea and oblation of gifts we shall make you, as often aforetime,

Should but the daughter of Zeus, the bestower of booty, Athene,  
Graciously grant me to live, and my son to arrive at his manhood.”

Then once more made answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

“Take thou courage, nor suffer thy heart herein to be anxious !

Now let us carry the gifts to the depth of this wonderful grotto ;

There we will hide them at once, since there we can leave them in safety ;

Then let us twain take counsel together to act for the wisest.”

Thus when the goddess had spoken she plunged in the shadowy cavern

Eagerly searching for places of hiding ; and quickly Odysseus

Bringing the whole of his treasure—the gold and the bronze adamantine,

Fine-wrought garments as well, that Phaeacian nobles had given—

Stowed them away ; and a boulder was set in the door by the goddess,

Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.

Then did the twain at the base of the sacred olive recline them,

There to consult, devising the doom of the insolent suitors.

First of the twain to begin was the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

“Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,

Think how best with a strong right hand these suitors to punish,

Shamelessly lording it still, as for three long years, in thy palace,

Wooing thy godlike wife and offering presents as lovers,

While with continual grief in her heart, as she waits for thy coming,

All she befooleth with hopes, and she giveth her promise to each one

Sending him many a message ; but things far other she longs for.”

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

“Lo now, just as it happ’d to Atrides, King Agamemnon !

Just his terrible doom in my halls I was fated to suffer,

Hadst thou not told me of all, O goddess, and duly advised me.

Now come, weave me a plan, how best I may hope to requite them.

Stand thou too by my side, and with dauntless courage endure me,

E’en as at Troy, when we loosened her shining tiara of towers.

Art thou so eager to stand, O grey-eyed goddess, beside me,

Then am I ready enough three hundred foes to encounter,

Having thy favour, my lady and goddess, to help and befriend me.”



Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“Yea assuredly still I befriend thee, and ne’er shall forsake thee  
Then, when at last we shall come to the work ; and if much I mistake not,  
Soon with his blood and his brains the unmeasured earth will bespatter  
Many a man of the suitors, who now are wasting thy substance.  
Come, I will change thy appearance that none shall be able to know thee ;  
All of the fair smooth flesh on thy pliant limbs will I wither,  
Shrivel the yellow hair from thy head and wrap thee in raiment  
Beggary, such that a man might shudder at any that wore it.  
Lustreless too will I make thine eyes, once gleaming in beauty,  
So that a thing of contempt thou’lt seem to the whole of the suitors,  
Yea to thy wife and the son thou didst leave as a babe in thy palace.  
Now for thyself—’twere best to betake thee at first to the swineherd,  
Even the thrall who attends to thy pigs. He is full of devotion  
Both for thyself and thy son and the wise-souled Penelopeia.  
Sitting in charge of the swine thou’lt find him—the herd that is feeding  
Nigh to the Raven’s Rock at the side of the spring Arethusa,  
Eating the acorns wherein they delight, and drinking the fountain’s  
Dark sweet water—a food that doth nourish luxuriant fatness.  
Here by the side of the swineherd remain and question him fully,  
While I betake me to Sparta, the city of beautiful women,  
Telemachus to recall ; for thy son, thy beloved, Odysseus,  
Thither, to wide Lacedaemon, is gone and to prince Menelaus,  
Tidings of thee to discover, if still on the earth thou art living.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Why hast thou said to him nought of the truth, though fully thou knewst it ?  
Was’t to compel him to wander with sufferings, like to his father,  
Over the wastes of the sea, while strangers devour his possessions ? ”  
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
“Let not the thought of thy son too grievously trouble thy spirit.  
I myself was his guide, for I wished him to win by the journey  
Manly renown. Nor imagine he suffereth hardship. In comfort  
Now in Atrides’ palace he sits in the midst of abundance.  
True, in their black-hulled ship these youths are lying in ambush  
Eager to kill him before he arrives at the land of his fathers ;  
Yet do I reckon not thereof, for the earth far sooner shall swallow  
Many a one of the wooers who daily consume thy possessions.”

Thus when Athena had spoken, her wand she extended and touched him ;  
All of the fair smooth flesh on his limbs of his body she withered,  
Shrivalled the yellow hair from his head, and the whole of his person,



*Odysseus* Every limb, with the skin of a man right agéd she covered ;  
*XIII* Lustreless too did she make those eyes, once gleaming in beauty ;  
*280 - 300* Round him in stead of his raiment she wrapt vile rags and a doublet  
Hanging in tatters and filthy, with smoke all foully besmuted,  
Over him cast as a mantle the hide of a timorous roe-deer  
Naked of hair, and she gave him a staff and a beggarly wallet  
Terribly tattered and torn; and thereon was a cord to suspend it.  
Thus, their counsellings ended, they parted, the goddess Athene  
Going to fair Lacedaemon to seek for the son of Odysseus.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XIV

**N**OW by a footpath rough he ascended that led from the harbour  
Winding aloft to the heights through woodland slopes; for Athene  
Here had enjoined him to seek for the good old swineherd, who tended  
Godlike Odysseus' estate far more than the rest of his servants.

Under the porch of a hut he discovered him sitting. His farmyard,  
Loftily builded, was here in a site with a beautiful prospect.

Goodly and great was the yard, and a run was around it. The swineherd  
Built it himself for the swine in the years when his master was absent,  
Saying thereof no word to his lady and agéd Laertes.

Stones he had dragged from afar for the kraal and with thorns he had fenced it.

Round it he ran a stockaded enclosure on this and on that side—

Stakes right sturdy and close, that he cleft from the core of the oak-tree.

Then in the midst of the yard he erected a dozen of pig-sties,

One by the side of the other, as beds for the swine; and in each one

Penned was a herd of the wallowing beasts, full fifty together,

Females for breeding—the males had an outer enclosure to sleep in;

Also the number was smaller by far, for the arrogant suitors

Ate and diminished them ever, commanding the swineherd to send them

Always the best that of all of the fat-fed hogs was the finest.

Thus was the number of males of the swine three hundred and sixty.

Savage as ravening beasts, were always watching beside them

Four fierce dogs that the swineherd had trained with the hand of a master.

Now was the man to his feet adjusting a couple of sandals,

Cutting them out of the hide of an ox bright-coloured. His fellows

Each with a drove of the swine were hither and thither departed,

Three of them—while that another, the fourth, he had sent to the city

Driving a boar;—since so had the insolent suitors commanded,

Wishing to slaughter the beast and to feast to their souls' satisfaction.

Now of a sudden the dogs, incessantly watching and barking,

Saw him and rushed at him, raising a yelp—but the wily Odysseus

Warily crouched on the ground, down-dropping the staff that he carried.

Then at the farm of the which he was lord foul hurt had he suffered,

Had not the swineherd, on feet right active hurrying after,

Run to the courtyard gate, down-dropping the hide that he carried,

Shouted abuse on the dogs and chased them to this and to that side

Showering stones; then turning he spake to Odysseus, his master:

“Ay, in a moment more, old man, they had torn thee to pieces,

*Odysseus* Right on the spot—and a great disgrace were fallen upon me !  
Troubles enough already the gods have sent me, and sorrows.  
Mourning for ever and wailing the loss of a godlike master  
Here do I sit, and I batten his swine—yet only in order  
Others may eat while craving for food he is wandering somewhere,  
Begging his bread in a distant land or a city of strangers,  
Haps it indeed that he still is alive and beholdeth the sunlight.  
Follow me now, old man ! Let us enter the cottage, that thou too,  
After partaking of bread and of wine to thy heart's satisfaction,  
Mayest relate both whence thou art come and the woes thou hast suffered."

These words said, to the cottage returning the good old swineherd  
Led him within, and he strewed for a couch soft branches of brushwood,  
Spreading above them the fell of a long-haired goat of the mountains,  
Shaggy and large, that he used for a bed ; and Odysseus was joyful  
So to be welcomed, and spake to the swineherd, and thus he addressed him :  
" Zeus vouchsafe, O stranger, and other immortals, to grant thee  
All that is dear to thy soul in return for thy kindly reception."  
Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
" Stranger, it were not right, if a guest still poorer than thou beest  
Came to my door, to disdain him. 'Tis Zeus our Father that sendeth  
Beggars and guests ; though small be my gift it is willingly given.  
So it is ever with those who, as we, are servants of others,  
Always living in dread when as masters rule in the household  
Nothing but youths. But the one whom the gods have stayed from returning,  
He was a master had loved me indeed and allowed me possessions,  
Even a house and a glebe and a consort comely in person,  
Such as a lord kind-hearted is wont to bestow on a servant,  
One that has toiled for him much, whose labour the heaven hath prospered,  
E'en as it prospers this labour of mine that I alway attend to.  
Many had been my rewards had he reached old age in his homestead.  
Ah but he perished . . . as would that the kindred of Helen had perished  
Utterly—since she hath loosened the knees of so many a fighter.  
He too went, for the sake of avenging the king Agamemnon,  
Unto the horse-rich Ilian city to fight with the Trojans."

Thus did he speak, and in haste with his belt upgirding his tunic  
Went to the yard, where litters of swine were penned in the pig-sties.  
Here two sucklings he chose, and he carried them forth and despatched them,  
Singed them and cut them in pieces and spitted the flesh on the skewers.  
Then, so soon he had roasted it well, to Odysseus he brought it



IN THE COTTAGE OF THE SWINEHERD



Hot on the skewers, with barley-meal all whitely besprinkled.  
Wine then sweet as the honey he mixed in a mazer of ivy,  
Sat him adown in the front of his guest and addressed him, and urged him :  
“ Eat now, stranger—’Tis fare that a thrall is permitted to offer—  
Suckling. The fat-fed hogs are eaten alone by the suitors,  
Men that regard not the wrath of the gods nor the call of compassion.  
Yea and the blessed immortals approve not iniquitous actions ;  
Honour they pay to the justice of men and to all that is righteous.  
Even unprincipled men who as ravagers land in a country,  
Home of a foreign folk—should Zeus vouchsafe them a booty  
So that they fill their vessels and sail straight back to the homeland—  
Even on these there falls great dread of the anger of heaven,  
While these others . . . it’s something they know—some whisper of Rumour  
Touching his mournful fate—that hath rendered them alway unwilling  
Fairly to woo or return to their homes. In disdainful composure  
Recklessly all the estate they despoil, and the waste is unending.  
Every morning and night which Zeus our Father vouchsafes us  
Slaughter of victims is made—not of one, nor of two, but of many ;  
Yea and the store of the wine they diminish by recklessly drawing.  
Truly his wealth was unspeakably great. Such riches had no one,  
None of the princes that dwell on the dark expanse of the mainland,  
Nor on the Ithacan isle. The possessions of twenty together  
Equalled it never. But come, I will reckon and fully recount it :  
Cattle—a dozen of droves, and a dozen of flocks, on the mainland ;  
Pigs—twelve droves ; and as many the wandering goats that he owneth.  
These by his own and by alien herds are driven to pasture.  
Here too pasture his goats—and the number of flocks is eleven—  
Ranging the uttermost ends of the island with goatherds to guard them.  
Daily doth each of the men bring one of his flock to the suitors,  
Choosing the beast that of all of the fat-fed goats is the finest—  
Ay and myself, whose task is to guard and attend to the pigs here,  
Ever I carefully choose them the hog that is fattest and send it.”

Thus did he speak ; but Odysseus partook of the flesh and the wine-bowl  
Eagerly, sitting in silence and plotting the doom of the suitors.  
Then, when at last he had dined and his heart was contented with eating,  
Filling a vessel—the cup that he used for his drinking—the swineherd  
Offered it brimming with wine ; and he took it, and gladdened in spirit  
Opened his lips in response, and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Who was it now, good friend, whose riches bought thee as servant ?  
Who was the master so wealthy and mighty, of whom thou relatest—

*Odyssey* **XIV** He that hath perished, thou say'st, in avenging the king Agamemnon?  
Tell me his name! for perhaps I have seen such man as thou sayest.  
Known is it only to Zeus and the other immortals in heaven  
Whether I met him and tidings can give—for afar I have wandered."

Forthwith answering spake Eumaeus master of swineherds:  
"Oft doth it hap, old man, that a wanderer comes who reporteth  
Tidings—but never persuadeth my lady or dear young master.  
Many a vagrant is wont, when he hopes for a kindly reception,  
Lies to invent, and he cares not at all for the truth of his story.  
Every wandering wight that arrives at the Ithacan island  
Findeth his way to the queen and brings some tissue of falsehoods;  
All she receiveth with kindness and plieth them closely with questions,  
Grieving at every word, while tears fall fast from her eyelids,  
E'en as a woman is wont when afar hath perished her husband.  
Thou too, gaffer, methinks wouldst forge some fabulous fiction  
Quickly enough, were one to present thee a mantle and tunic.  
Ah but I doubt that the dogs and the swift-winged fowls will be tearing  
Long since all of the skin from his bones, and the spirit hath left them;  
Else in the deep he was eaten of fishes, and now on the sea-shore  
Lieth his skeleton bleaching and swathed in the coils of a sand-drift.  
Yea he is perished afar, and hath left us in sorrow who loved him,  
All of us—mostly howbeit myself, since never another  
Master as kind shall I meet, how far soever I wander,  
Not if again to the house I returned of my father and mother,  
Even the home in the which I was born and was reared by my parents.  
Nor is it longer for them that I mourn—though often I sorrowed,  
Yearning to see them again and to find me again in my homeland—  
No—but a longing doth hold me for him that is gone—for Odysseus.  
Merely to mention his name, O stranger, as one that is absent,  
Paineth my heart—for he loved me indeed and he cared for me truly—  
Rather, although he is far, I will call him my lord and my brother."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus:  
"Friend, as thou wholly deniest my words and declarest thy master  
Never again will return, and incredulous still is thy spirit,  
So I will state it not only in words; with an oath I assure thee  
Home is returning Odysseus. A gift for the news thou shalt give me  
First on the day when he hither arriveth and reacheth his homestead;  
Then shalt thou clothe me in beautiful raiment—in mantle and tunic;  
Ere he arrives will I nothing accept, though sorely I need it.



Hateful to me as the portal of death and of Hades a fellow  
Maketh himself who induced by his poverty uttereth falsehoods.  
First then witness it Zeus, and this table whereat I am welcomed,  
Yea and the hearth to the which I am come of the noble Odysseus,  
Verily all these things that I tell thee shall find a fulfilment :  
Whilst this year on its path still circles return shall Odysseus,  
Even as this moon dies and the new-born moon is appearing,  
Yea he shall come to his home and shall smite with a terrible vengeance  
Those who dishonour his wife and insult his illustrious offspring.”

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumæus the swineherd :  
“ Never, I fear, old man, shall I give thee a gift for thy tidings ;  
Never again to his home will Odysseus return—But, I pray thee,  
Drink and be still, or of something besides let us think ! and recall not  
This to my mind ; for it maketh the heart in the bosom within me  
Grievously suffer whenever my dear true master is mentioned.  
Touching thy oath—we will leave it to heav’n ; and I pray that Odysseus  
Yet may return ; ’tis the hope of myself and of Penelopeia,  
Yea and of agéd Laertes and Telemachus the heroic.  
Ah but for him I am terribly troubled—this son of Odysseus,  
Telemachus. By the grace of the gods as a sapling he flourished,  
Till I had almost believed that as man he was destined to equal  
Even his own dear father—so goodly his form and his favour.  
Then, of a sudden his reason was thrown from its balance (I know not  
Whether by man or immortal) and, tidings to seek of his father,  
Now he is journeyed to Pylos the fair, and the arrogant suitors  
Lurking in ambush await his return, that from Ithaca’s island  
All of the race of the hero Arceisius wholly shall perish.  
Well, we will leave it to heaven to let him be taken or let him  
Safely escape—should Zeus hold o’er him a hand to protect him.  
Come now, speak of thyself, old man, and recount me thy troubles.  
One thing firstly relate me exactly, for fain will I know it :  
Who art thou ? Whence art thou come ? Tell too of thy city and parents.  
Whose was the vessel whereon thou hast come ? How haps it that sailors  
Brought thee to Ithacan land ? What folk do they boast to belong to ?  
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that thou hither arrivedst.”

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“ Well now, all of the truth will I tell thee and clearly explain it.  
Would that we two had abundance of sweet strong wine and of viands  
Such as to last so long as we willed to remain in thy cottage

Quietly feasting and letting the others betake them to labour.  
Easily even the whole of a year were filled by my story  
Ere I had finished the tale of the sorrows my spirit hath suffered,  
All of the travail I wrought by the will of the blessed immortals.  
First I avow that I come from the widespread island of Creta,  
Child of a man not lacking in wealth—nor in sons was he lacking.  
Many another was born and was bred in the halls of his palace,  
Lawfully born of a wife that was wed ; but a slave was my mother,  
Bought as a leman—yet like to a rightful son he esteemed me,  
Castor Hylacides, whose blood I can boast to belong to.  
He by the people of Creta was honoured like an immortal  
Both for his glorious sons and his goodly estate and his riches.  
Now did the dread Death-Fates to him come, and departing they bare him  
Down to the mansion of Hades. At once the estate they divided,  
These high-spirited youths, and by casting of lots they assigned it.  
Me they apportioned a share right scanty, but gave me a dwelling,  
Whither I took me a wife, whose kindred had many possessions,  
Men who respected my valour—for then I was neither a weakling  
Nor in the battle a coward . . . but now it is gone ! it is over !  
Yet e'en so, from the stubble methinks thou'lt make a conjecture  
What was the grain—for indeed past telling is all that I suffered.  
Courage was ever vouchsafed me by Ares and Pallas Athene,  
Courage that bursteth the ranks of the battle. Whene'er for an ambush  
All of the bravest I chose, designing a raid on the foemen,  
Ne'er in my valiant heart was a boding of death or of danger ;  
Far to the front of the others I sprang with my spear, and I slaughtered  
Every foe that by swiftness of foot was unable to flee me.  
Such was I ever in war ; but I loved not the labour of tillage,  
Neither the care of a home nor to rear me a glorious offspring.  
Ships were ever the joy of my heart, and the oarage of vessels,  
War and the weapons of war, bright-polished lances and arrows,  
Things right painful to view and arousing abhorrence in others.  
Well—I delighted in things God gave to my heart to delight in.  
This occupation is pleasing to one and that to another.  
Ere on the Trojan shores were landed the sons of Achaea  
Nine times led I a body of fighters in fleet-winged vessels  
Unto a distant land, and immense was the spoil that we captured.  
Ever I chose what delighted my heart of the booty, and later  
Much I acquired by lot ; and my house grew rapidly richer,  
Till ere long I became respected and feared by the Cretans.  
Now when the war was ordained by the Father who speaketh in thunder

(Hateful emprise, that hath loosened the knees of so many a fighter!)  
Me did the people command, with Idomeneus the heroic,  
Unto the Ilian city to lead with the vessels; nor any  
Means to refuse we possessed, for the voice of the people was urgent.

*Odyssey*

*XIV*

*246 - 274*

Nine years long did we battle around it, we sons of Achaea,  
Till in the tenth, when at last we had plundered the city of Priam,  
Homeward we sailed—and a god drave widely apart the Achaeans.  
Then was my ruin devised, ah me, by the all-wise Father.  
Only a month in my home I remained, and I joyed in my children,  
Joyed in the wife of my youth and my riches; but shortly thereafter  
Unto the river of Egypt my spirit impelled me to voyage  
Taking on ships well-fitted a band of heroic companions.  
Nine I equipped, and the men right speedily gathered together.  
Then for the next six days made merry my faithful companions,  
Constantly feasting on many a victim, wherewith I supplied them  
Both for oblation and also to furnish themselves with a banquet,  
Till, on the seventh, embarking, the widespread island of Creta  
Soon we had left, and impelled by a fair fresh breeze of the North Wind  
Easily sped, as it were down-current, not one of the vessels  
Suffering any mishap; and in safety we sat and in comfort  
Watching them held to their course by the favouring wind and the steersman.  
Five days later we came to the fair broad stream of Aegyptus.  
Here, in the river of Egypt, I stationed my twy-beaked galleys.

Then did I issue an order to all of my trusty companions  
Quietly there to remain at the side of the vessels and guard them  
While that I sent forth scouts to explore from the neighbouring outlooks.  
Yielding however to wanton desires and arrogant boldness  
Soon they invaded the beautiful fields of the people of Egypt,  
Wasting the country and taking away both women and children,  
Slaughtering also the men; and the cry reached quickly the city.  
These then, hearing the shout, as the new-born day was appearing  
Came, and the whole of the plain seemed full of the footmen and horses,  
Full of the flashing of bronze; and the god who delighteth in thunder  
Cast on my comrades a panic so fearful that none had the courage  
Firmly to stand and to face them—for danger was pressing on all sides.  
Now of my friends with the edge of the sword full many they slaughtered,  
Many they captured and led them away to the labours of bondsmen,  
While for myself—it was Zeus that again suggested the counsel—  
(Would I had died with the rest and encountered my destiny there too,

Even in Egypt—for nothing but woe hath awaited me alway !)

... Straight from my head I unfastened my well-wrought helmet and dropt it,

Also the shield from my shoulders I dropt, and the spear that I carried.

Then in the way of the king and his chariot-horses I threw me,

Grasped at his knees and embraced them and kissed them. He pitied and saved me

Made me to mount on his car and brought me in tears to his palace.

Truly with ashen spears came many attacking me fiercely,

Longing to stab me to death, since sorely enraged was the people ;

Yet did he ward them aside, for he dreaded the anger of heaven,

Even of Zeus, who is god of the guest and avenges transgression.

Years full seven I lived in the land, and amidst the Egyptians

Many possessions I gathered, for all of them gave to me freely.

Now did it happen at last, as the eighth year made a beginning,

Came a Phoenician man who was versed in deceitful devices,

Fraudulent huckster—a knave who had wrought much mischief already.

Me with his wiles he cajoled, and I followed him back to his homeland,

E'en the Phoenician land, where lay his estate and his houses.

Here I remained with the man till a year had completed its circuit ;

Then, when the circle of days and of seasons was fully accomplished,

While that the year was returning and springtide followed the winter,

On to an ocean trader for Libya bound he embarked me,

Forging the falsehood he needed my aid in conveying the cargo,

While he intended to sell me and win him a profit enormous.

Him by compulsion I followed aboard, though full of foreboding.

Soon she was running before fresh breezes and fair of the North Wind

Midst of the sea, past Creta—but Zeus their doom was devising ;

Yea, for as soon as the island was dropping behind us, nor any

Other land was in sight, but the heaven alone and the ocean,

Then was a black-blue cloud commanded to halt by Cronion

Over the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep sea darkened.

Zeus at that instant thundered and lightning hurled at the vessel.

Struck by the bolt of the Father she shook all over and staggered,

Filled with a sulphurous flame. From the ship fell all of my shipmates ;

Then on the waves like gulls at the side of the black-hulled vessel

Floated and tossed ; and the god thus ended their hope of the homeland,

While for myself—it was Zeus that again in my desperate peril

Brought to the grip of my hands such means to escape from destruction,

Even the monstrous wreck of the mast of the blue-prowed vessel,

Clinging to which I was drifted along by the ruinous storm-winds.

Nine days long was I borne ; on the tenth in the blackness of midnight

Nigh to Thesprotian land I was brought by the roll of the ocean.  
Here did a prince heroic, the king of Thesprotia, Pheidon,  
Freely receive me as guest ; for the well-loved son of the monarch  
Found me, as faint from the cold sea air and outworn I was lying,  
Gave me a hand and supported my steps till we came to the palace ;  
Ay and he clothed me about with a garment—with mantle and tunic.

There did I hear of Odysseus : the monarch himself (he assured me)  
Here had received and entreated him well on his way to his homeland.  
Also he showed me the wealth that Odysseus had gotten together,  
Treasures of bronze and of gold and of well-wrought iron that lay there—  
Treasures sufficient to feed one's heirs to the tenth generation—  
Such was the wealth that Odysseus had stored in the halls of the monarch.  
Now he had gone, I was told, to Dodona, to list to the counsel  
Zeus from the thick-leaved height of his oak might utter, to guide him  
So as to win once more to the fruit-rich Ithacan island,  
Whence so long he is missed, whether open his coming or secret.  
Yea he assured me on oath, as he poured in his hall a libation,  
Dragged to the sea was the ship and the band of the rowers was ready,  
Waiting to carry him home to the well-loved land of his fathers.  
Me ere this he despatched—for it chanced that a vessel was sailing,  
Manned with Thesprotian folk, to the island of bountiful harvests  
Dulichium, and he bade them convey me to chieftain Acastus,  
Carefully. Ah but a plot right cowardly won their approval  
Touching myself—that I yet might sink to the depths of disaster.  
Far from the land was already the ship as she voyaged the waters :  
Then they began to devise to enslave me and sell me as bondsman.  
Firstly they stript from my body my garment—the mantle and tunic ;  
Round me, in stead of my raiment, they cast vile rags and a doublet  
Tattered and torn—in the which thou beholdest me sitting before thee.  
Now in the even, arriving at far-seen Ithaca's corn-lands,  
Me in the well-decked vessel they left, where straitly they bound me,  
Using a twisted rope, but themselves, from the ship disembarking,  
Hastily made them a meal by the surf-beat strand of the ocean.  
Then did the gods themselves unloosen the knots of the cordage,  
Easily bending it back ; and, my head in the wrapper enveloped,  
Down by the polished rudder descending, I laid on the water  
Softly my breast, and with both of my hands kept rowing and shore-ward  
Swam—and I quickly was out of the water and far from pursuers.  
Then I ascended the shore to a thick-leaved copse of the woodland ;  
Cowering here in the bushes I lay ; and with much lamentation

Hither and thither they wandered and sought me—till, deeming it useless  
Further afield to explore, they departed again, and returning  
Mounted the hollow ship ; and the gods everlasting concealed me  
Easily ; ay and they guided me well, till I came to thy farmstead,  
Home of a good wise man—where life once more is vouchsafed me.”

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumæus the swincherd :  
“ Ah, poor friend, right deeply thou touchest the heart in my bosom  
Telling of all thou hast seen and all thou hast suffered in far lands.  
Still not aright do I think thou hast spoken—nor canst thou convince me—  
Touching Odysseus . . . And yet . . . what avails it for any as thou beest  
Profitless lies to invent ?—Ah well, one thing I am sure of  
Touching my master’s return : he was hated of all the immortals  
Utterly, since they permitted him neither to perish in Troyland  
Nor in the arms of his friends, when wound to an end was the warfare,  
Else had the whole of Achæa erected a tomb to his honour,  
Yea and for Telemachus he had left great glory behind him.  
Ah but the Spirits of storm to a death inglorious swept him.  
Well—for myself—all lonely I live with my swine, and the city  
Never I visit, except when the wise-souled Penelopeia  
Summons me thither, if haply a rumour arriveth from somewhere.  
Then will they all sit round such comer and question him closely,  
All who for aye are mourning the master that never returneth,  
Ay and the ones that delight them unpunished in eating his substance,  
All but myself—for I care not at all to examine and question  
Since an Aetolian once with a fabulous story befooled me,  
One who had slain some man and had wandered in many a country  
Ere he arrived at my farm ; and a loving reception I gave him.  
This was his story : in Creta with Idomeneus he had seen him ;  
Here he was mending his ships, that the storms of the ocean had shattered,  
Yea and he surely was bound to arrive by the summer or autumn  
Bringing abundance of treasure and all his heroic companions.  
Thus, old man, though many thy woes—since now to my homestead  
Heaven hath brought thee—attempt not with fables to please or console me.  
Never for reason of this will I give thee respect and affection,  
Nay but for fear of the god of the stranger—and also for pity.”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Verily dwells in thy bosom a right incredulous spirit,  
Since not e’en with an oath am I able to move and convince thee.  
Well, let us make an agreement, and bind us to keep it hereafter,



Both of us calling to witness the gods who inhabit Olympus :  
Should he return, this master of thine, and arrive at thy farmstead  
Then shalt thou clothe me in garments—in mantle and tunic—and send me  
Safely to Dulichium, to the which I was longing to journey.  
Should he however, thy master, arrive not just as I told thee,  
Order thy drudges to seize me and over a precipice hurl me,  
So that another that cometh to beg shall beware of deceiving.”

Him then addressing in turn gave answer the good old swineherd :  
“ Yea and forsooth, O stranger, my good reputation and prowess  
Thus were bruited abroad midst mortals, now and hereafter,  
Were I to bring thee as guest to my cottage and kindly entreat thee,  
Then to a murderer turn and of life’s dear treasure bereave thee !  
Light were ever my heart when I prayed to the Father Cronion !  
Now it is time for the supper, and soon, as I hope, will my fellows  
Enter, and then we can make us a right good meal in the cottage.”

Thus these twain, as they sat, held converse one with the other.  
Meanwhile near to the farm were coming the swine and the swineherds.  
Then, as the droves of the sows were penned in the places for sleeping  
Indescribable grunting and squealing arose in the farmyard.  
Forthwith loudly he called to his fellows, the good old swineherd :  
“ Bring ye the best of the hogs ! I will slaughter the beast for a stranger  
Come from afar ; and ourselves will enjoy it as well, for the labour,  
Toiling and moiling in charge of the white-tusked pigs, is unending—  
Ay and we toil while others consume our labours unpunished.”

These words uttered he clave him the wood with the pitiless hatchet,  
While that a five-year hog, well-fatted, was brought by the fellows.  
Close by the side of the hearth it was placed ; nor now did the swineherd  
Fail to remember the gods, since good was the heart in his bosom.  
First in the flame as an earnest he cast an oblation of bristles  
Cut from the head of the hog, and to every deity offered  
Vows that Odysseus the wise might come once more to his homeland,  
Then uplifting a billet of oak that was left from his cleaving  
Smote—and the hog fell dead ; and they opened its gullet, and singed it,  
Speedily jointed it too ; and from every member the swineherd  
Cut for oblation a slice and in unctuous fat he enwrapped it.  
This when he cast in the fire, with fine-ground barley besprinkled,  
Chopping the rest of it small on the skewers they spitted the pieces,  
Carefully roasted the whole, and withdrawing it all from the skewers



*Odyssey* Laid it together in heaps on the trenchers ; and then did the swineherd  
*XIII* Rise to dispense it, for well was he practised in dealing it fairly.  
*104-120* Seven the messes he made in apportioning all and dividing ;  
One for the nymphs and for Maia's son, Hermeias the herald,  
Setting aside with a prayer, and the rest to the others allotting,  
Unto Odysseus he gave as an honour the long, undivided  
Chine of the white-tusked hog, and delighted the heart of his master,  
So that with swift-winged words addressed him the wileful Odysseus :  
“ Would, Eumaeus, that Zeus our Father may love thee as I do,  
Seeing that, poor as I be, thou dost honour and treat me with goodness.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
“ Eat, unfortunate friend ! come eat and enjoy what is present,  
Such as we have ! For the rest, it is God that shall give or withhold it  
Howsoever he willet—*to God are possible all things.*”

These words spoken, the earnest he burnt to the gods everlasting,  
Poured a libation, and unto Odysseus the sacker of cities  
Handed the glowing wine ; and he sat him adown to his portion.  
Bread was dispensed to them all by Mesaulius. Him had the swineherd  
Bought at his sole expense in the years when his master was absent,  
Saying thereof no word to his mistress and aged Laertes,  
Purchased by means of his own possessions from Taphian people.  
Now did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all pleasure in meat and the wine-cup,  
Then was the rest of the bread by Mesaulius cleared, and they straightway,  
Sated with bread and with flesh, felt moved by a longing for slumber.

Now came night unlit by the moon and tempestuous ; Zeus rained  
Ceaseless, and strongly was blowing the West, that is ever the rain-wind.  
Then did Odysseus, addressing them all, make proof of the swineherd,  
Whether his cloak he was willing to doff and to lend, or to order  
One of his fellows to strip—so great was his care for the stranger.  
“ List to my words, Eumaeus, and all of you others, his fellows !  
After a prayer I will tell you a tale. 'Tis the wine that incites me—  
Maddening stuff, that induceth the sage to break into singing,  
Ay and to laugh right sweetly, and even to dance will arouse him ;  
Yea more—maketh him speak what oft were better unspoken.  
Still—as the silence is broken already—my tale shall be ended.  
Would that I still were young, in the prime of my strength, as aforetime,  
E'en at the time when beneath Troy's ramparts we posted an ambush.  
Leader thereof was Odysseus—and prince Menelaus Atrides ;

Also myself was a third in command, since thus they had wished it.  
Now when at last we had come to the city's precipitous ramparts,  
There all round of the citadel walls in the covert of thickets,  
Crouching beneath our shields in the middle of reeds and of marshes,  
Lay we in ambush. Foul was the night ; though fallen the North Wind,  
Keenly it froze, and the snow kept falling and glinted as hoar-frost  
Bitterly cold, while icicles formed on the rims of the bucklers.  
Well now, each of the rest of the men in his mantle and doublet  
Quietly slept, with his shield as a covering over his shoulders,  
While for myself—I had left, when I started, my cloak with a comrade  
Carelessly, never suspecting the cold might make me to suffer ;  
So with my buckler alone and shining jerkin I followed.  
Now at the tierce of the night, when the stars were passed to their setting,  
Thus did I speak, addressing Odysseus, who happ'd to be near me,  
Nudging his side with my arm ; and he instantly listened attentive :  
'Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,  
Verily soon I shall cease from the living. By cold I am conquered,  
Frozen to death ; for a cloak I possess not ; a deity fooled me  
Making me come with a jerkin alone ; too late I repent it.'  
Thus did I speak, and at once in his mind this plan he invented,—  
Such was the hero not only in fighting but also at counsel ;  
Dropping the tones of his voice to a whisper he turned to me saying :  
'Keep thee quiet—that none of the other Achaeans shall hear thee !'  
Then on his elbow upraising himself he addressed his companions :  
'Listen, my friends ! As I slumbered a deity sent me a vision.  
Lo, right far from the ships we are come. 'Twere better if some one  
Carried a message to King Agamemnon, the prince of the people,  
Begging him urge more men from the vessels to come and support us.'  
Thus did he speak, and at once bold Thoas, the son of Andraemon,  
Hastily rising and doffing his cloak of Phoenician purple  
Started to run to the ships of the Greeks—while wrapped in his raiment  
Softly I lay, till the Morning appeared, enthroned in her glory.  
Would that I now were young, in the prime of my strength, as aforetime !  
Then might one of the herds at a pig-farm give me a mantle  
Both as a kindness and eke for respect of a brave old soldier—  
Now they despise me, beholding me vested in wretched apparel."

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
"Gaffer, in praise of my lord thou hast told us a capital story ;  
Neither as yet hast thou uttered a profitless word or a foolish,  
So thou shalt lack not a garment ; and nothing besides will I grudge thee,

*Odyssey* Nought that 'tis right to bestow on unfortunate beggars that meet one,  
XII Just for to-night—In the morn thou'lt wrap thee again in thy tatters,  
111-115 Seeing that here no mantles in plenty nor changes of tunics  
Have we to deck us withal ; each man one garment possesses.  
Shouldst thou await the return of the well-loved son of Odysseus,  
He will be ready to clothe thee in raiment, in mantle and tunic,  
Ay and will send thee wherever thy heart and thy spirit shall call thee."

These words spoken he rose to his feet and adjusted a bedstead  
Nigh to the hearth, and upon it he cast soft fleeces and goatskins.  
Here did Odysseus recline ; and he covered him o'er with a mantle  
Heavy and large, that was ever at hand as a change of apparel  
Ready for donning whenever arose some terrible tempest.  
Thus in the cottage was sleeping Odysseus, and lying around him  
Slumbered the boys of the farm ; but the master of swineherds it pleased not  
There to remain in a bed and afar from the swine to be sleeping.  
So he accoutred himself, and he went ; and Odysseus exulted  
Seeing the man thus care for the wealth of his lord in his absence.  
After his sharp-edged sword he had slung to his stalwart shoulders,  
Over his body a mantle he cast right heavy and wind-proof ;  
Then, upsnatching the fell of a fine fat goat for his mattress,  
Also a lance sharp-pointed, from dogs and from men to protect him,  
Forth to the white-tusked boars he betook him, to slumber beside them  
Under a hollow rock in a place well screened from the North Wind.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XV

**N**OW to the spacious land Lacedaemon was Pallas Athene  
Gone, for the gallant son of the great-souled hero Odysseus  
Thence she was willed to recall to his home and to hasten his coming.  
Nestor's glorious son and Telemachus she discovered  
Couched in the porch of the hall of the far-famed prince Menelaus.

Sleeping was Nestor's son, for by slumber soft he was conquered,  
While sweet sleep had abandoned the son of Odysseus, and wakeful  
All the ambrosial night he had brooded on thoughts of his father.  
Standing anigh then addressed him the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
"Telemachus, no more is it meet from thy home to absent thee,  
Leaving possessions behind and strangers too in thy homestead  
Wantonly wasting thy wealth, lest soon they shall wholly despoil it,  
Yea and divide it among them, and vain prove therefore thy journey.  
Come now, ask that at once Menelaus good at the war-cry  
Send thee, and still in thy home mayst meet with thy excellent mother,  
Though already her father and brothers incessantly bid her  
Marry with Eurymachus, who hath ever excelled with his presents  
All of the rest, and is now increasing his gifts as a wooer.  
So shalt thou stay her from taking the goods from the house, if thou wiltst not.  
What is the spirit that dwells in the heart of a widow thou knowest.  
Ever she aims at enriching the house of the man that will wed her :  
Nought for her earlier children or husband loved in her girlhood  
Cares she, if once he is dead ; and she asks no longer about him.  
Therefore return to thy home, and entrust with the care of the household  
One of the women attendants that seemeth the best and the wisest,  
Till that a glorious bride by the gods everlasting be sent thee.  
Something besides will I say ; do thou lay it to heart, I beseech thee.  
Lo, with malicious intent are lurking the chief of the suitors  
Just 'twixt Ithacan shores and the rock-bound island of Samos,  
Wishing to slay thee before thou arrivest the land of thy fathers.  
Yet do I reckon not thereof, for the earth far sooner shall swallow  
Many a one of the wooers who daily consume thy possessions.  
Keep thou the well-built ship right far from the shores of the island ;  
Voyage also at night ; and a favouring breeze shall attend thee,  
Sent by the goddess that alway affordeth thee aid and protection.  
Now on the nearest beach of the Ithacan isle disembarking,  
After despatching the vessel and all of thy mates to the city,  
Hasten afoot and betake thee at first to the hut of the swineherd,

Even the thrall who attends to thy swine and is loyal as alway.  
Here shalt thou rest for a night, and shalt urge him to enter the city  
Bearing a message to give to the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
So that she learn that again she hath got thee in safety from Pylos."

These words uttered, the goddess departed to lofty Olympus.  
Forthwith Nestor's son from his pleasant slumbers he wakened,  
Stirring the youth with a touch of his heel; and he spake and addressed him:  
"Wake, Peisistratus, wake! and the hard-hoofed steeds from the stable  
Hasten to bring and to yoke to the car! Let us start on the journey!"  
Straightway Nestor's son Peisistratus answered him saying:  
"Telemachus, though eager for starting we surely can never  
Drive in the darkness of night. Ere long will be coming the daylight.  
Wait till the hero bringeth the gifts on the car to be laden,  
Even the hero Atrides, the spear-famed prince Menelaus,  
Yea and until with a kind farewell he shall speed thy departure,  
Since that a guest should surely remember as long as he liveth  
Whosoever to strangers hath offered so kindly a welcome."

Thus did he speak, and anon came Morning enthroned in her glory.  
Then drew nigh to the twain Menelaus good at the war-cry,  
Newly from sleep by the side of the fair-haired Helen arisen.  
Him as he saw approaching, the well-loved son of Odysseus,  
Hastily seizing to cover his body a glistering tunic,  
Donned it, and casting a great thick cloak on his sinewy shoulders  
Went to the door. Here waited the prince, till approached and addressed him  
Hero Telemachus, loved son of Odysseus the godlike:  
"Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,  
Let me return, I beseech, to the well-loved land of my fathers  
Now—for already my heart is beginning to yearn for the homeland."  
Him then in answer addressed Menelaus good at the war-cry:  
"Telemachus, I will try no longer here to retain thee,  
Since thou yearnst to depart; for I always censure another,  
Whosoever receiveth a stranger and showeth affection,  
Showeth dislike too much. Fair measure is better in all things.  
Equally great is the wrong if a host, when his guest is unwilling,  
Urge him to go—or attempt to retain him when eager for starting.  
Cherish a present guest; if he wishes to leave thee, allow him!  
Wait howbeit a while, till I bring, on the car to be laden,  
Beautiful gifts—thou shalt see them thyself; and the maids shall be bidden  
Get us a dinner prepared in the hall from the store of provisions.

Honour and glory to me it will bring, and to you an advantage,  
Ere ye depart on a journey so boundless, with food to refresh you.  
Wishest thou also in Hellas and midmost Argos to travel,  
Wait—I will come! I will order them straightway horses to harness;  
Unto the cities of men I will guide thee, and never shall any  
Send us away as we came; some present he surely will give us,  
Either a well-wrought tripod of bronze maybe, or a cauldron,  
Or peradventure a couple of mules, or a gold-wrought goblet.”

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,  
Unto my native land I am fain to return, for behind me  
None, when I came, did I leave as a guard to protect my possessions;  
Else it is like that in seeking my godlike father I perish,  
Or some treasure of worth disappear from the halls of my homestead.”  
Now when he heard these words, Menelaus good at the war-cry  
Straightway spake to his wife and the women attendants, and bade them  
Get him a dinner prepared in the hall from the store of provisions.  
Meanwhile thither approached Boëthous’ son, Eteóneus,  
Newly arisen from sleep—for he dwelt not far from the palace.  
Him Menelaus commanded to kindle a fire, and upon it  
Roast of the meat; and he heard the behest, nor was slow to obey it.  
Then to the fragrant room of his treasure descended the hero,  
Neither alone did he go; Megapenthes followed, and Helen.  
Now when he came to the place where stored were all of the treasures,  
Forthwith prince Menelaus a twy-cupped goblet selected,  
Also his son Megapenthes he ordered to carry a wine-bowl  
Solid of silver; and Helen to wardrobe-boxes betook her,  
Where rich-broidered apparel was hoarded, the work of her needle;  
Hence uplifted a garment and took it the fairest of women,  
One that was richest embroidered of all of the robes and the largest,  
Glistering, like to a star; and the lowest of all it was lying.  
Then to the front of the palace they passed, and here they discovered  
Telemachus, and the prince fair-haired Menelaus addressed him:  
“Telemachus, the return to thy home, for the which thou art sighing,  
May it be granted by Zeus, loud-thundering husband of Hera!  
Mine is the granting of gifts; and of heirlooms stored in my palace  
One will I give, most fair, most precious of all my possessions;  
Yea I will give thee a bowl rich-worked; it is solid of silver  
All of it, save that in gold are finished the lips of the vessel;  
Wrought was the bowl by Hephaestus; and hero Phaedimus gave it,



*Odyssey* King of the people of Sidon, when once in his palace I sojourned  
XI While I was voyaging home. This cup will I also present thee.”

115 116

These words spake Menelaus the prince, and the twy-cupped chalice  
Placed in the hand of his guest ; and the stalwart youth Megapenthes  
Brought him the bowl, and in front of him stationed the glittering vessel  
Solid of silver ; and next came fair-faced Helen anigh him,  
Holding a robe in her hands, and she spake and greeted him saying :  
“ I too bring thee a present, my well-loved child—a memento—  
Handwork of Helen—her gift for the longed-for day of thy marriage,  
Even a robe for thy wife. Let thy mother belov'd in the meanwhile  
Lay it aside in her chamber ; and may'st thou in safety and gladness  
Come to thy well-built home once more and the land of thy fathers ! ”  
These words spoken she reached him the robe, and with joy he received it.  
All of the presents did then Peisistratus take, and he stowed them  
Into the chest of the car, upon each of them gazing in wonder.

Now to the palace he led them, the fair-haired prince Menelaus.  
Here, so soon as they sat them adown on the couches and armchairs,  
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer  
Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,  
Bidding them wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside them.  
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread, and she laid it before them,  
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.  
Nigh them Boëthous' son stood carving the meat and dispensing,  
While that the bearer of wine was the son of renowned Menelaus.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Forthwith Telemachus and Nestor's glorious offspring  
Yoking the horses and up on the rich-wrought chariot mounting  
Drove from the gate of the house and the loudly reëchoing portal.  
After them hasted on foot fair-haired Menelaus Atrides  
Bringing a bumper—a chalice of gold full-brimmed—in his right hand,  
Wine honey-hearted, to pour as libation before they departed.  
Fronting the horses he stood, and restrained them and uttered his speeding :  
“ Now farewell to you both, young men ! and to Nestor the chieftain  
Carry my greeting, for like to a father he treated me kindly  
While in the Trojan land were warring the sons of Achaea.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
“ Yea, assuredly just as thou biddst, Zeus-loved Menelaus,  
All we shall tell him whene'er we arrive ; and I would that as surely





"FAREWELL TO YOU BOTH, YOUNG MEN!"



Coming to Ithaca's isle 'twere mine to discover Odysseus  
There in his home, and to tell him of all thou hast shown me of kindness  
Ere I returned thus laden with many a beautiful treasure."

*Odyssey*

XI

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E'en as he spake these words on the right came winging an eagle,  
Bearing a great white goose in the clutch of his talons—a tame one  
Robbed from the yard of a farm; and a clamorous rabble pursued it,  
Women and men—but the bird, when it now full nigh had approached them,  
Suddenly swooped to the right in the front of the horses. Exulting  
All of them saw it, and warm was the hope that arose in their bosoms.  
Broken by Nestor's son Peisistratus first was the silence:  
"Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus, bethink thee  
Whether to us or to thee some deity sendeth this omen!"

Thus did he speak, and in doubt was the warlike prince Menelaus  
How to respond to the youth and the portent rightly interpret.  
Ere he replied forestalled him the long-robed Helen and answered:  
"Listen, for lo I will utter a thing that the blessed immortals  
Put in my heart to predict—and I trow it will find a fulfilment.  
E'en as to capture the goose that was feeding secure by the farmstead  
Down from the mountain he swooped, from his native haunts and his eyrie,  
Thus shall Odysseus, with all of his toils and his wanderings ended,  
Come once more to his home and avenge him—or even already  
There is arrived, and already is plotting the doom of the suitors."  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer:  
"May it be granted by Zeus, loud-thundering husband of Hera!  
Then in the land of my birth as a goddess I'll ever invoke thee."

Speaking, he smote with the lash at the horses: in eager excitement  
Thorough the streets of the city and out to the open they galloped.  
So for the whole of the day kept shaking the yoke on their shoulders,  
Till, when the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,  
Unto the township of Phera they came, and the house of Diocles,  
Offspring of Orsilochus, who was son of the river Alphéus.  
Here did they rest for the night, and as host he entreated them kindly.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Yoked they the horses and up on the rich-wrought chariot mounting  
Drave from the gate of the house and the loudly reëchoing portal.  
Then did he whip to a start, and the steeds flew eagerly onward,  
Till ere long they arrived at the steep-built city of Pylus.

*Odyssey* Here spake Telemachus and to Nestor's son he addressed him :  
81  
1000-1009  
"Tell me, Peisistratus—couldst thou not promise and also accomplish  
This that I ask ? We can claim that a lifelong friendship unites us,  
Since that my father by thine was belov'd—and in age we are equals ;  
Ay and to oneness of heart still more will this journey contribute.  
Take me not further, I pray, but allow me to halt by my vessel,  
Lest that the ancient king (as I fear) in his palace detain me,  
Eager to show me a kindness—for home it is need that I hasten."  
Thus did he speak, and a while with his heart Peisistratus communed  
How it was seemly to make him the promise and also fulfil it.  
Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better :  
Turning his horses he came to the beach and the swift-winged vessel ;  
Here on the poop of the ship he embarked the magnificent presents,  
All of the raiment and gold that the prince Menelaus had given ;  
Then he addressed him with swift-winged words and exhorted him, saying :  
"Haste thee aboard, and the whole of thy company bid to embark them,  
Ere I arrive at the palace and bring to my father the tidings,  
Since right well do I know in the mind and the spirit within me,  
Such is his obstinate temper, he ne'er will allow thy departure ;  
Hither himself he will come to invite thee, nor ever, believe me,  
Empty return, and despite thy excuse will be terribly angered."

These words spoken, he started his fair-maned horses and drave them  
On to the Pylian city, and soon was arrived at the palace.  
Telemachus meanwhile uproused and commanded his shipmates :  
"Set ye in order the gear, good friends, in the black-hulled vessel,  
So we can get us aboard and be making a start on the journey."  
Thus when he spake right gladly they hark'd to his words and obeyed him.  
Quickly they mounted the vessel and sat them adown on the benches.

So was he busied and making oblation and vows to Athene  
Close by the stern of the ship, when a man drew nigh him, an exile,  
One that had murdered a man and was fled from a distance, from Argos,  
Famed as a prophet and claiming descent from the stock of Melampus.  
Formerly Pylos, the mother of flocks, was the home of Melampus ;  
Rich was the man and of mighty estate in the Pylian people,  
Till at the last to a country of strangers he came from his homeland,  
Fleeing the proudest of all men living, the arrogant Neleus,  
Him who had seized his possessions and during a year's revolution  
Kept them by force ; meantime, in the dwelling of Phylacus prisoned,  
Heavily fettered he lay and suffered grievous afflictions.

Cause of it all was the daughter of Neleus—ay and his blindness,  
Terrible blindness of heart that was sent by the vengeful Erinyes.  
Yet this doom he escaped, and the bellowing cattle to Pylos  
Back out of Phylace driving avenged on the godlike Neleus  
All of that shameful deed, and he brought to the home of his brother  
Neleus' daughter, and gave her as wife ; then he left for a far land,  
E'en for the horse-rich pastures of Argos ; and here he was fated  
Further to dwell and to rule o'er many a son of the Argives.  
Here did he marry a wife, and a high-roofed homestead he built him ;  
Antiphates he begat and Mantius, progeny stalwart ;  
Offspring of Antiphates was the valiant-hearted Oicles ;  
Then was Oicles the sire of the warrior Amphiaraus,  
Him who was shown by Apollo and Zeus that beareth the aegis  
Every manner of love. Eld's threshold still he attained not,  
Since that he perished at Thebes through gifts to a treacherous woman.  
Amphiaraus was father of Antilochus and Alcmaeon.  
Two sons Mantius also begat, Polyphoides and Cleitus.  
Cleitus was taken from earth by the Morning, the golden-enthronéd,  
All for his beauty's sake—and he dwelleth amid the immortals,  
While that the high-souled prince Polyphoides was made by Apollo  
Greatest of seers, since living no longer was Amphiaraus.  
He to the town Hyperesia moved, enraged with his father ;  
Here did he make him a home and predicted the future for all men.  
Now it was this man's son, Theoclymenus named, who approaching  
Closely to Telemachus, stood there at his side and beheld him  
Pouring libation and praying beside of his swift black vessel.  
Then he uplifted his voice and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Friend, since just in the act of performing oblation I find thee,  
Lo, by thy gift to the god and the deity's self I beseech thee,  
Yea and thy life and the lives of the men that attend thee as shipmates,  
Answer me truly the question I ask thee, nor try to conceal it,  
Whence and what mortal thou beest. Tell too of thy city and parents.”

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
“ Yea, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and plainly declare it.  
Ithaca's isle is the land of my birth, and my sire is Odysseus—  
Were he alive !—but alas, by a grievous doom he is perished.  
Wherefore now I am come with my men and my black-hulled vessel  
Tidings to seek of my sire who so long is away from his homeland.”  
Then did the godlike seer Theoclymenus answer him saying :  
“ I too wander afar—for I murdered a man in my homeland,

*Odyssey* One of my tribe, that hath many a brother and many a kinsman  
At There in the horse-rich pastures of Argos—Achaean of station.  
215-211 Fearing their vengeance, before that the darkness of death overtook me,  
Thence I am fled, and am fated from people to people to wander.  
Give me a place on thy ship—as a fugitive, lo, I beseech thee!—  
Lest they shall slay me; for closely, methinks, do they follow behind me.”

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Nay, if thou wishest it, ne’er will I drive thee away from my vessel.  
Come with us! Also at home thou art welcome to all we can give thee.”  
These words uttered, the brass-bound spear from the hand of the stranger  
Taking, he laid it reclined on the deck of the twy-beaked galley.  
Then embarking aboard of the ocean-voyaging vessel  
Nigh to the steerage he sat him adown, and closely beside him  
Bade Theoclymenus sit, and the shipmates loosened the hawser.  
Forthwith Telemachus uproused and commanded his comrades  
Set their hands to the gear, and they speedily rose and obeyed him.  
Raising the pinewood mast to its height, in the cleft of the cross-bar  
Firmly they fixed it, and bracing it taut to the prow with the forestays  
Hoisted the fair white sails with the ropes tight-twisted of oxhide.  
Sent was a favouring breeze by the grey-eyed goddess Athene,  
Sweeping with vehement gusts thro’ a clear blue sky, that the vessel  
Over the salt sea water with speed might finish her journey.  
Soon past Crouni they sailed and the beautiful river of Chalcis,  
Till, when the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,  
Sped by the breezes of Zeus she was near to the haven of Pheae,  
Then passed Elis the wonderful land where rule the Epeans.  
Thence to the Pinnaced Isles he directed the course of the vessel,  
Wondering whether his death were lying before him or safety.

Now in the hut was Odysseus again with the good old swineherd  
Sitting at supper, and all of the farmyard fellows beside them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all pleasure in meat and the wine-cup,  
Then in the midst did Odysseus begin, thus testing the swineherd  
Whether he still was inclined to entreat him with kindness and bid him  
There to remain at the farm or to urge him to visit the city:  
“List to my words, Eumaeus, and all of you others, his fellows!  
Early the morn I am minded to get me adown to the city;  
There will I beg, lest here both master and men I shall ruin.  
Give me advice and vouchsafe me a guide right trusty to lead me  
Unto the city. Within it alone I shall fare, as I needs must,  
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Wandering round in the hope that a cup or a crust will be offered.  
Also I mean to arrive at the palace of godlike Odysseus,  
There to relate what I know to the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Ay and moreover am fain to apply to the insolent suitors  
Whether a meal they'll give me from all their boundless provisions.  
Easily might I supply them with service, whatever was wished for,  
Since (and of this I assure thee and I beg thee to listen and mark me)  
Under the favour of Hermes the herald of heaven, who alway  
Crowneth the labour of men with the guerdon of grace and of glory,  
Such is my deftness in serving no mortal can hope to excel me  
Either at skilfully building a fire or in cleaving the fuel,  
Ay or at carving or roasting the meat or at brimming the wine-cup,  
Duties at which great folk have service of men that be meaner."

Him then in heavy displeasure addressed Eumaeus the swineherd :  
"Out and alas ! how comes it, my friend, such thought is arisen  
Now in thy mind ? By my troth, thou'rt utterly set on perdition,  
Thus intending to venture thyself in the rout of the suitors,  
Whose fierce insolence reacheth aloft to the brazen heaven.  
Underlings such as thyself these men keep not to attend them ;  
Striplings they have, all finely apparelled in mantles and tunics ;  
Gleaming with oil is the head and comely the face when a servant  
Serveth the men at a feast ; and the polished banqueting-tables  
Ever with bread and with flesh and with wine groan heavily laden.  
Nay but abide with us still ! There's none that is harmed by thy presence,  
Neither myself nor another of all of my fellows who live here.  
Willst thou await the return of the well-loved son of Odysseus,  
He will be ready to clothe thee in raiment, in mantle and tunic,  
Ay and will send thee wherever thy heart and thy spirit shall call thee."  
Him gave answer at once long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
" Would, Eumaeus, that Zeus our Father may love thee as I do,  
Since thou hast given me rest from my roamings and terrible hardships.  
Nought is an evil for man more sad than to rove as an outcast ;  
Yet for the belly—accurséd thing !—full many an insult  
Beareth a man when he suffers as wanderer pain and privation.  
Well now, seeing thou holdest me here, and biddst me await him,  
Give to me tidings, I pray, of the mother of godlike Odysseus,  
Yea and his sire, whom he left on the threshold of eld when he parted.  
Are they alive peradventure and still in the realm of the sunlight ?  
Are they departed already to dwell in the mansion of Hades ? "



Forthwith answering spake Eumæus master of swineherds :  
“ Well, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and plainly declare it.  
Touching Laertes—he liveth ; but Zeus he is ever imploring  
Out of his body to wither his soul in the halls of his homestead,  
So unspeakably mourns he the son that is gone and is vanished,  
Yea and the wife of his youth, wise Anticleia—for sorely  
Grieved he at heart when she died, and to eld untimely it brought him.  
She too perished of grief for her son—for the noble Odysseus.  
Grievous indeed was her death, and I pray none other may end so,  
None that is dwelling anigh and is friendly in word and in action.  
Now while yet she was living on earth, though living in sorrow,  
Still was it ever my joy to inquire and learn of her welfare,  
Since as her child she had loved and with long-robed Ctímene reared me—  
Ctímene, tall fair maiden, the youngest of all of her children—  
Reared us together, and little she honoured me less than her daughter.  
Now when we both had arrived at the season of love and of beauty  
Her for a countless treasure they sent to a Samian chieftain ;  
Me did my lady—whenas she had given me mantle and tunic,  
Beautiful raiment to clothe me withal, and had shod me in sandals—  
Send to the farm ; but she loved me at heart still more than aforetime.  
Now is my happiness vanished away ; but the blessed immortals  
Prosper the work of my hands—this task that I alway attend to ;  
Yea and enough is my food and my drink, and I give to the honest.  
Still, I am able to gain no pleasant news of my mistress  
Neither by word nor deed—for the house by a plague is infested,  
Even this insolent horde ; and a thrall hath greatly the longing  
Now and again with his lady to speak and to learn what is needed,  
Ay and to get him a meal and a drink, and a trifle to carry  
Back to the farm—such trifles as comfort the heart of a servant.”

Him then in turn thus answered and spake deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Heav’ns ! how far thou hast wandered when small, Eumæus the swineherd,  
E’en as a child so far from thy native land and thy parents !  
Come now, tell me the thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it.  
Perished the wide-way’d city of warriors, pillaged by foemen,  
Where was the dwelling-place of thy sire and his lady, thy mother ?  
Or in a lonesome spot while tending the sheep or the oxen  
Captured by hostile men wast thou carried aboard and exported  
Unto the home of this master of thine, who purchased thee dearly ? ”

Forthwith answering spake Eumæus master of swineherds :  
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“Since, O stranger, thou fain wouldst hear of this matter and learn it,  
Listen in silence and make thee at ease, and quaff of the wine-cup  
There as thou sittest. The night at this season is endless ; for sleeping  
Time is enough, and to feast or to list to a tale—and thou needst not  
Lay thee to slumber before it is time. Much sleep is a mischief.  
Touching the others, whoever is bid by his heart and his spirit  
Now can depart to his bed, and as soon as the morning appeareth,  
After his breakfast is done, let him follow the swine of the master.  
We two here in the cottage remaining, and drinking and feasting,  
Each will delight him in hearing the toils and the griefs of the other,  
While we relate of the past—since trouble is sweet to remember,  
After it ends, for a man that hath wandered afar and hath suffered.  
So I will tell thee of all that thou fain wouldst learn of the matter.

There is an isle Syrië (thou hast heard its name peradventure)  
Past the Ortygian isle, where pauseth the sun and returneth ;  
Not so exceedingly full is the island of folk, but is fertile,  
Richly abounding in flocks and in herds and in corn and in vineyards.  
Famine hath never invaded the land, nor ever another  
Pestilence such as afflicts poor mortals grievously oftimes.  
Here when the folk that inhabit the land grow agéd and feeble,  
Then with his silvern bow, and with Artemis, cometh Apollo,  
Launching his painless bolts, and assails them and suddenly slays them.  
Towns in the isle are twain, and the whole is divided amongst them.  
Over the one and the other alike ruled solely my father,  
Ctesius Ormenides, who a god everlasting resembled.  
Once came hither a crew of the famed Phoenician sea-folk,  
Hucksters with countless trinkets and gauds in their black-hulled vessel.  
Now in the house of my sire was a young Phoenician woman  
Comely and tall and endowed with a deftness in exquisite handwork.  
Her with their wileful ways these sly Phoenicians cheated.  
Firstly, anigh to the hollow ship, as she tended the washing,  
One of them met her and won her by love—such love as deceiveth  
Often the womanly heart, yea even of her that is upright.  
Then, as the fellow demanded her name and the name of her homeland,  
Straight she confessed it, describing the high-roofed house of her father :  
‘ Native of Sidon, the city abounding in bronze, I avow me,  
Daughter of Arybas—one who was lavishly dowered with riches.  
Taphians stole me away—sea-roving robbers, who caught me  
While from the fields I was coming. They carried me over the ocean  
Here to the home of this master of mine ; and he paid for me dearly.’

Then did the man who in secret had won her address her in answer :

‘ Say now, wouldst thou be willing to come with us back to thy homeland,  
Unto the high-roofed house of thy father and mother, and see them,  
Even themselves ? for I know them to live and be famed for their riches.’

Then did the woman address him again, and she answered him saying :

‘ Ay, ’twere possible so, if ye all were willing, ye sailors,  
Surely to promise on oath to convey me unharmed to my homeland.’

Thus did she speak, and they all of them promised on oath, as she bade them.

Then, so soon as they gave her the oath and had finished the plighting,  
Spake once more to the sailors the woman and answered them saying :

‘ Now keep silence ! Let none of you venture a word to address me,

None of the crew, if we pass in the street of the village, or haply

Meet at the fountain, for fear lest somebody go and relate it

Unto the master at home, and the old man, growing suspicious,

Straitly confine me in bonds and devise some plan to destroy you.

Keep ye the matter in mind. Push forward the purchase of cargo.

Then, when at last your vessel is freighted with store of provisions,

Speedily send to the palace a message to tell me the tidings.

Gold I will bring you—whatever shall come to the reach of my fingers ;

Ay and besides, for my fare, I am willing to make you a present.

There is a child of the goodman . . . I serve as his nurse in the palace—

Such a precocious chit . . . on my walks comes trotting beside me.

Him I shall manage to wheedle aboard ; and a profit enormous

Sure he will bring, wherever to foreign folk ye export him.’

These words spoken, the woman returned to the beautiful mansion.

Now for the whole of a year did the sailors, abiding amongst us,

Traffic and lade on the hollow ship great store of provisions.

Then, when at last their vessel was freighted and ready for sailing,

One of them bearing a message they sent to report to the woman.

So he arrived—sly fellow—and entered the house of my father

Bringing a necklace of gold that with droplets of amber was beaded.

Now as the maiden attendants and also their lady, my mother,

Crowded around in the hall to examine and handle the trinket,

Bidding their prices, he silently gave to the woman the signal.

After the sign he had made to the hollow ship he departed.

Taking me then by the hand she conducted me forth, and it happened,

Passing the porch of the house, she discovered the tables and goblets

Left by the guests, who had there on my sire been paying attendance—

These to the session had gone and the place of the people’s assembly.

So three goblets she took and concealing them well in her bosom  
Carried them off—and I went with the woman in innocent folly.  
Set was already the sun and darkened was every roadway  
Ere to the far-famed haven we came—though urgently hasting—  
Where was at anchor the vessel of those Phoenician seamen.  
Forthwith now they embarked, and they took us aboard and departed,  
Sailing the watery ways with a stern-wind sent by the Father.  
Six days long did we sail—and by night no less than by daytime—  
Till when the light of a seventh was added by Father Cronion  
Suddenly smit was the woman by Artemis, darter of arrows ;  
Into the bilge down-dropping she plunged as a gull of the ocean.  
Her dead body, to serve as a spoil for the seals and the fishes,  
Out of the vessel they cast ; and with desolate heart I was left there,  
Till on the Ithacan isle by the wind and the currents of ocean  
Wafted we happ'd ; and there I was bought by the wealth of Laertes.  
So did I come to behold this land on the which I am dwelling.”

Then did Odysseus the offspring of Zeus thus answer him saying :  
“ Ah, Eumaeus, profoundly thou stirrest the spirit within me,  
Telling the tale of thy life—of the toils and the woes thou hast suffered.  
Natheless unto the evil hath Zeus much happiness added  
Bringing thee after thy perils and toils to the home of a master  
Kindly—a master that gives thee of food and of drink in abundance,  
Tending thee well. ’Tis a life right pleasant thou livest—but, ah me !  
Ere I arrived I had roamed through many a city of mortals ! ”

Thus these twain, as they sat, held converse one with another.  
Then did they lay them to sleep, for a space not long, but a little.  
Soon rose Morning enthroned in her glory.

And now on the sea-shore  
Telemachus and his men were striking the sails, and the mast-tree  
Quickly they lowered, and pulled with the oars to her moorings the vessel,  
Then cast sleepers, and after the stern they had fastened with cables  
Out of the vessel they stepped on the surf-beat strand of the ocean,  
Where they prepared them a meal ; and they mingled them fiery red wine.  
Then, when at last they had lost all pleasure in meat and the wine-cup,  
Spake sage Telemachus, and thus he began to address them :  
“ Ye now hasten ahead to the town with the black-hulled vessel !  
Touching myself, I am going to visit the farms and the herdsmen.  
After inspecting the fields I shall come to the city at nightfall.

*Odysseus.* Early the morn I shall offer, as wages due for the voyage,  
A Lavish abundance of meat and of savoury wine for a banquet."

*Telemachus.*

Then did the godlike seer Theoclymenus answer him saying :  
"Ay but for me, dear child . . . where now shall I go? In his mansion  
Which of thy rockbound Ithaca's chieftains will offer me shelter?  
Wilst thou I make me my way forthwith to thy home and thy mother?"  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
"Were it but otherwise, yes—to the home of my fathers I'd bid thee  
Straight to proceed; for it fails not in welcome to guests; but thou mightst there  
Evilly fare, for I thence shall be absent myself, and my mother  
Ne'er will behold thee; for little she cares in the halls with the suitors  
Oft to appear, but alone in her upper apartment she weaveth.  
Nay, I will name thee another—a man would give thee a welcome.  
Eurymachus he is called, wise Polybus' glorious offspring.  
He as a god by the people of Ithaca now is regarded,  
Being a man far better than all of the rest; and he greatly  
Longeth my mother to win and to rule in the stead of Odysseus.  
Ah but the Father alone who dwells on the heights of Olympus  
Knows if he first will vouchsafe them espousals or utter destruction."

Scarce had he spoken when, lo, on the right came flying a falcon,  
Messenger bird of Apollo, the soaring hawk, in his talons  
Clutching and tearing a dove; and to earth fell floating the feathers  
'Twixt where Telemachus was reclining and beached was his vessel;  
Whom then apart from the rest of the men Theoclymenus calling,  
Gave him a clasp of the hand, as he opened his lips and addressed him :  
"Sure as a sign from a god on the right came flying the falcon!  
Yea and as soon as I saw it I knew that the bird was an omen.  
Telemachus, more royal than yours no race is existing  
Here in the Ithacan land; ye shall aye be established in power."  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer :  
"Stranger, I pray for the word thou hast spoken to find a fulfilment;  
Then shalt thou speedily find both friendship and many a present  
Come from me—such that whoever shall meet thee will hold thee as blessed."  
These words spoken, he called Peiraeus, his trusty companion :  
"Clytius' son, Peiraeus, of all thou'rt ever the foremost  
Me to obey—of the men that as shipmates followed to Pylos.  
Now too listen, and take our friend as a guest to thy homestead!  
Carefully tend him and kindly entreat him until my arrival!"  
Straight did the spearman renowned, Peiraeus, address him in answer :

“Telemachus, yea surely ; and thinkest thou long to remain here,  
Still he shall stay as my guest, nor ever be wanting in welcome.”

*Odyssey*

*VI*

*Lines 1-77*

These words uttered he mounted the vessel and called to his comrades,  
Bidding them also embark and unloose from the moorings the cables.  
Then did they get them aboard and they took their seats on the benches.  
Telemachus meanwhile on his feet bound beautiful sandals,  
Also his spear bronze-bladed and mighty, of terrible keenness,  
Took from the deck ; and the men made loose from the moorings the cables.  
Then out-thrusting they sailed for the town, as the prince had commanded,  
Even the well-loved son of the hero, godlike Odysseus.  
Him on his way bare swiftly his feet, till he came to the farmstead  
Where was the numberless drove of his swine, and the good old swineherd  
Watching them even by night, with devotion true to his masters.





# ODYSSEY BOOK XVI

**N**OW in the hut was Odysseus again with the good old swineherd  
Making him ready a breakfast at dawn on the fire they had kindled,  
After the herdsmen had started with droves of the pigs to the pastures.  
Telemachus then approached ; and the dogs from their barking incessant  
Ceased as they fawned on their master, & godlike Odysseus perceived them  
Fawning in joy—and a sound as of footsteps approaching resounded.  
Quickly he turned to the swineherd, and swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Surely, methinks, Eumaeus, a comrade of thine, or acquaintance,  
Soon will be here, for the dogs have suddenly ceased from their barking,  
Ay and they fawn in delight ; and I notice a noise as of footsteps.”

All these words not yet had he uttered when, lo, in the doorway  
Stood his belovéd—his son ! Up leapt in amazement the swineherd,  
Out of his hands down-dropping the vessels with which he was busied  
Mixing the glittering wine, and to welcome his master he hastened,  
Kissed him on both of his cheeks, on his beautiful eyes and his forehead,  
Kissed him on both of his hands, while big tears fell from his eyelids.  
Just as a father who welcomes his son with a tender affection,  
One that was absent for ten long years in a distant country,  
Even his darling, his only begotten, whom much he hath grieved for,  
Thus to the godlike Telemachus did the good old swineherd  
Cling, and he kissed him and kissed him, as one that had 'scaped from destruction,  
While with a pitiful cry these swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Telemachus, sweet light of my eyes, thou art come ! and I thought not  
E'er to behold thee again when I knew thee departed for Pylos !  
Enter, my child, my belov'd, come, enter ! I long to rejoice me  
Seeing thee here in my home just safely arrived from a far land.  
Seldom it haps that thou comest to visit thy farm and thy herdsmen ;  
Ever thou bidest at home, and thou seemest to find it a pleasure  
There to remain and to gaze at the ravening horde of the suitors.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“ Well, I will do as thou biddest me, dad ; 'tis for this I am come here,  
Even to see thee and learn all news thou art able to give me,  
Whether my mother is still at the palace, or whether already  
One of the wooers has won her to wife, and the bed of Odysseus  
Stript of its bedding is lying befouled, all covered with cobwebs.”

Forthwith answering spake Eumaeus master of swineherds :

"Ay, assuredly, still with a steadfast heart she abideth  
There in the halls of the palace; and filled with the gloom of her sorrow  
Waneth the day and waneth the night, while ever she weepeth."  
These words spoken, the spear bronze-bladed he took from his master.  
Then stept over the threshold of stone and entered the cottage  
Telemachus; and his father Odysseus, who saw him approaching,  
Rose to vacate him his seat; but the youth restrained and addressed him:  
"Seated remain, O stranger! A seat no doubt I shall find me  
Somewhere else in my farm—and here is the man to provide it!"

Thus did he speak, and Odysseus again sat down, and the swineherd  
Strewed for a seat green branches and covered them o'er with a sheepskin;  
Here forthwith did the well-loved son of Odysseus recline him,  
While that the trenchers of meat were set by the swineherd before them,  
Even the rest of the roast that was left of the evening supper;  
Bread moreover he busily hasted to pile in the baskets,  
Wine too, sweet as the honey, he mixed in a mazer of ivy;  
Then did he sit him adown in the front of the godlike Odysseus.  
So they extended their hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Then spake Telemachus addressing the good old swineherd:  
"Dad, whence cometh the stranger, thy guest? how haps it that sailors  
Brought him to Ithacan land? what folk did they boast to belong to?  
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that he hither has journeyed."

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd:  
"Well, now listen, my son, for the whole of the truth I will tell thee.  
First, he avows that his home is the widespread island of Creta.  
Then he affirms he has strayed through many a city of mortals  
Ceaselessly drifting about: such fate did a deity spin him.  
Lastly, escaped from a ship in the which Thesprotian sea-folk  
Held him as slave, he arrived at the farm—and to thee I consign him.  
Deal with him just as thou wilt. As a suppliant, lo, he entreats thee."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Ah, Eumaeus, in sooth 'tis a grievous word thou hast spoken.  
How can I hope to receive this stranger as guest in my homestead?  
Lo—for myself—I am still but a youth, nor as yet can I trust me  
Unto the strength of my hands, should any assail me in anger,  
While for my mother—her heart is divided asunder with doubts  
Whether with me to remain and attend to the needs of the household,  
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Honouring duly the bed of her lord and the voice of the people ;  
Or is she meaning to follow as bride some Ithacan chieftain,  
Best of the suitors that woo her—whose offer of gifts is the largest ?  
Touching the stranger—as now he is come to thy home, I shall give him  
Beautiful raiment to clothe him withal, both mantle and tunic ;  
Also a two-edged sword will I give, and provide him with sandals,  
Ay and will send him wherever his heart and his spirit shall call him.  
Else, if thou wishest to keep him thyself as a guest at the farmstead,  
Clothes will I send for him hither and plentiful store of provisions,  
Eatables—lest the expense bring ruin on thee and thy fellows.  
Thither to go—to the suitors—I certainly ne'er will permit him,  
Seeing in truth these men are mightily wanton and cruel,  
Lest they insult him—a thing that to me were terribly grievous,—  
Ay, they can injure him too—for the one midst many opponents,  
Though right sturdy he seems, were quickly o'ermastered by numbers."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
" Friend—for I trow I possess thy permission to offer an answer—  
Truly the heart in my bosom is wounded to hear thee recounting  
All of the wanton and insolent deeds by the suitors committed  
There in the halls of thy home, in despite of thyself and thy manhood.  
Say, is it really thy will to submit ? or else do the people  
Hold thee perhaps in abhorrence, induced by a warning from heaven ?  
Lay'st thou the fault on thy brothers—on whom to support him in fighting  
Trusteth a man, how grievous soever the feud that ariseth ?  
Would that I too were young and with suchlike feelings affected,  
Either the son of Odysseus the peerless, or even Odysseus  
Come from his wanderings back (since ever to hope is permitted) ;  
Then might even an alien churl cut the head from my shoulders  
Were I to fail me in proving a bane to the whole of that rabble,  
Going at once to the halls of the son of Laertes, Odysseus.  
Should however their numbers, alone as I stand, overwhelm me,  
Verily willing I were far rather to fall in my homestead,  
Ay and to die, than for ever to see such shameful procedure,  
Guests disgracefully treated, and servant-maids of the household  
Haled by the men thro' the halls of my beautiful home to dishonour ;  
Wine too wastefully drawn, and the fellows feasting and feasting  
Recklessly—all for an end that is vain and shall ne'er be accomplished."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
" Well, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and plainly declare it :

*Odyssey* Neither the whole of the people at all disliketh or hates me,  
*XVI* Nor is the fault in my brothers—on whom to support him in fighting  
*114-158* Trusteth a man, how grievous soever the feud that ariseth,  
Since that Cronion hath doomed our race in its heirs to be single.  
Sole was the son that was born to Arceisius, even Laertes ;  
Sole was the son of Laertes, Odysseus my father, who left me  
Sole in his palace as heir, nor ever had joy of his offspring ;  
Hence it is come that by foes unnumbered is holden my homestead.  
All of the foremost men who as chieftains rule in the islands,  
Samos and Dulichium and the woodland heights of Zacynthus,  
Ay and as many as well as in rockbound Ithaca lord it,  
All come wooing my mother and wasting the wealth of the household.  
She meanwhile dares neither reject their hateful proposals  
Nor can she end it ; and thus do the men, consuming, devouring,  
Ruin my home ; me too they will soon o'erwhelm in its ruin.  
Nay but we know not the truth ; on the knees of the gods it is lying !  
Dad, come haste thee away, and to wise-souled Penelopeia  
Say she hath gotten me safely returned from the journey to Pylos.  
Here I shall stay. Come hither as soon as the message is given.  
Only to her shalt thou give it. Let none of the other Achaeans  
Know of it, since full many a man plots evil against me."

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
" Ay but I know it, I know it, and well understand what thou biddest !  
Yet come, tell me a thing that I ask thee and plainly declare it !  
While on the road shall I take to Laertes also a message ?  
Ever till now hath the poor old man, though mourning Odysseus,  
Seen to the work of the fields, and together with thralls in the farmstead  
Ever hath eaten and drunk when the heart in his bosom enjoined him.  
Since however the day thou didst sail in the vessel for Pylos  
Never, they say, hath he eaten or drunken again as aforetime,  
Nor hath he seen to the work of the fields, but with wailing and moaning  
Sitteth and mourns, and the flesh on his bones is for ever decreasing."  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
" Yea, it is sad ; but I leave him alone, though truly it grieves me.  
Were all things to depend somehow on the ruling of mortals,  
First would both of us choose for my father to come to the homeland.  
Nay—now, after thy message, return—nor away to the country  
Wander in quest of Laertes, but speak to my mother and bid her  
Send her attendant as quickly as e'er she is able, the house-dame,  
Secretly ;—she is the one should carry the news to the grandsire."



TELEMACHUS RECOGNIZES HIS FATHER



Hearing the message, the swineherd aroused him and, taking his sandals,  
Fastened them under his feet, and he went to the town ; but Athene  
Failed not to note, as he came from the farm, Eumaeus the swineherd.  
Nigh she approached, and in form she had likened herself to a woman  
Beautiful, stately of person, and skilful in exquisite handwork.  
Right in the door of the cottage she stood and appeared to Odysseus ;  
Neither by Telemachus was she seen, though standing before him  
(Nowise to all do immortals reveal them in visible presence) ;  
Only Odysseus perceived her, and also the dogs ; but they barked not ;  
Whining they slunk them away to the end of the cottage and cowered.  
Then did she nod to him, moving her brows ; and the godlike Odysseus  
Noting it went from the cottage and passing the wall of the farmyard  
Halted before her ; and thus did the goddess Athena address him :  
“ Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wifeul Odysseus,  
Now is the moment to speak to thy son and reveal him thy story ;  
So shall ye forge you a plot for the doom and the death of the suitors.  
Then to the far-famed city descend ; nor fear ye that I too  
Long shall delay to be nigh you—so fiercely I yearn for the combat.”  
Spake, and her golden wand she extended, and lo, as it touched him,  
Firstly a fair fresh mantle around him was cast, and a doublet  
Covered his breast, and renewed was his body in stature and manhood ;  
Dark once more was the tint of his skin, and in face he was fuller ;  
Blue-black bristled the beard once more on his chin as aforetime.

This when the goddess had wrought she departed again, and Odysseus  
Back to the cottage returned ; and his well-loved son with amazement  
Stared—and averted his eyes in his dread to behold an immortal.  
Then did he open his lips and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Wholly another a moment ago, O stranger, thou seemedst.  
Other the clothes thou art wearing and other is also thy person ;  
Sure thou art one of the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven.  
Nay then, grant us thy grace ! We will offer thee grateful oblations—  
Vessels of gold, well wrought, will we give. Have mercy and spare us !”

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“ Sooth, I am none of the gods. Why deemst thou me like an immortal ?  
Nay, I am nought but thy father—the father for whom thou lamentest,  
Suffering many a woe and many an insult enduring.”

These words uttered, his son he embraced, and he kissed him, and teardrops  
Fell from his cheek to the earth. (Till now he had ever restrained them.)



*Odyssey* VIII  
Telemachus natheless, still doubting the man was his father,  
Once more opened his lips, and in answer he spake to him saying :  
"No, thou art never Odysseus my sire, but a spirit from heaven  
Come to beguile me, that ever the more I shall mourn in my sorrow.  
Ne'er might wonders as these be devised by the wit of a mortal,  
Never at least by himself; but a god that was present to aid him  
Easily, just as he willed, might make one youthful or aged.  
'Twas but a moment ago thou wast old and in pitiful raiment;  
Now thou art like to the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
"Telemachus, no need to be filled with exceeding amazement  
Only for this—that thy father is here once more in his homestead.  
Ne'er will another Odysseus return but the man that thou seest here,  
Even myself, as I am. Long, long have I suffered and wandered;  
Now in the twentieth year I am come to the land of my fathers.  
Touching this marvel, Athena the driver of spoil hath performed it,  
Making me such as she pleased (to the gods are possible all things),  
Changing me now to a beggar in semblance—a moment thereafter  
Turning me into a youth that is clad in a beautiful garment.  
Easy is all for the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven,  
Either to grant to a man great glory or else to abase him."

These words spoken, he sat him adown. Then bursting in tears fell  
Telemachus on the neck of his valiant father and kissed him.

Now in the bosoms of both was a longing awakened for wailing;  
Loudly they cried; more ceaseless the cry than of birds that bewail them,  
Ospreys or crook-claw'd vultures lamenting the loss of their younglings  
Robbed from the nest by a churl ere yet they had gotten their feathers;  
So incessantly fell from their eyelids the pitiful teardrops;  
Yea and the light of the sun were set on the long lamentation  
Had not the youth of a sudden exclaimed, addressing his father :  
"What was the vessel and what was the crew, dear father, that brought thee  
Unto the Ithacan isle? What folk do they boast to belong to?  
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that thou hither hast journeyed."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
"Well now, listen, my son—for the whole of the truth I will tell thee :  
Here was I brought by the famed Phaeacian seamen, who oftimes  
Homeward safely escort some wandering wight who arrives there.

While I was lying asleep on the swift-winged vessel they bore me  
Over the ocean, and set me on Ithaca ; glorious presents  
Also they gave me of bronze and of gold and of woven apparel.  
These by the grace of the gods are safely bestowed in a cavern.  
Now am I hither arrived by the hest and the help of Athene,  
So that we two may plan for the slaying of foes that molest us.  
Come now, tell me the tale of the suitors ! recount me the number !  
So shall I learn how many and who be the men to be dealt with,  
Ay and shall counsel me well with the valiant spirit within me,  
Pondering whether we twain shall be able alone to oppose them  
Sole and unaided, or needs must seek for the succour of others."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
" Father, it's true that I ever was told of thy wonderful prowess,  
Told of thy might in the battle as well as thy wisdom in counsel ;  
Still—too bold is thy speech. Dread holdeth me. Never, believe me,  
Two could hope to contend with so many and valiant foemen.  
Nor is it merely a ten, or a double of ten, that they number ;  
Greater by far is the tale ; thou shalt learn it at once ; I will count them.  
Hailing from Dulichium, of the choicest youths of the island,  
Fifty and two, and they bring in their train six pages to serve them.  
Then from the island of Samos a couple of dozen of chieftains ;  
Also a score at the least of Achaean youths from Zacynthus ;  
Lastly, of Ithacan nobles a dozen—the pick of the princes.  
Medon the herald is present with these, and an exquisite singer,  
Also a couple of carles right skilful in carving at banquets.  
Thus, if the whole of the number we find in the palace collected,  
Bitter and baleful I fear might prove the attempt to avenge thee.  
Nay but reflect if perchance thou art able to find us a helper ;  
Think if thou knowest of one that is heartily willing to aid us."

Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
" Well, I will tell thee the truth. Attentively listen and mark me !  
Think now ! Gained we the help of Athena and also her Father,  
Were it sufficient ? or need I to think of another to aid us ?"

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
" Truly redoubtable helpers I hold them—the two that thou namest.  
Yea, and although far off in the clouds they are sitting, they also  
Rule all things on the earth—not only among the immortals."

*Odysseus* Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
*XVI* " Verily no long time shalt thou find these twain to absent them  
*1* Far from the din of the battle, as soon as the suitors and we two  
Put to the test in the halls of my palace the fury of Ares.  
Well now, thus let us act : so soon as the morning appeareth  
Thou shalt return and consort thee again with the insolent suitors.  
Me then, after a while, shall the swineherd lead to the city  
Likened again to a poor old beggar of pitiful aspect.  
Should they dishonour me, there in my home, let the heart in thy bosom  
Calmly endure it, although right cruel the treatment I suffer ;  
E'en if they drag me along by the feet to the gate of the palace,  
Yea and attack me with missiles—be calm and behold it in silence !  
Natheless, speak an thou wilt, and advise them to cease from their folly !  
Urge and enjoin them with gentle entreaty ! But ne'er, I assure thee,  
Ne'er will they listen ; for truly the day of their doom is upon them.  
Also a thing will I say, which carefully mark and remember :  
Should in her wisdom the goddess Athena remind and exhort me,  
Then with a nod I shall give thee a sign ; and as soon as thou not'st it,  
All of the weapons of war we possess in the palace collecting  
Stow them away in the lofty recess of the room of the treasure,  
Every one—and with words of persuasion addressing the suitors  
Try to cajole them, if missing the arms they shall ply thee with questions.  
Say : ' I've stowed them because of the smoke. They resemble no longer  
Those once left by Odysseus behind him when sailing for Troyland ;  
Ruined is all by the breath of the fire, where'er it has reached them.  
Also a reason was put in my mind by the Father Cronion,  
Even the fear lest heated with wine and beginning to quarrel  
One on the other ye fall and with blood bring shame on your feastings,  
Ay and your wooings ; for iron itself attracteth to bloodshed.'  
Only remember for us to retain two lances and broadswords,  
Also a couple of targets of oxhide, ready to handle,  
So we can rush and possess us thereof ; then unto their ruin  
Pallas Athena the goddess and counsellor Zeus will entice them.  
Further, a thing will I say, which carefully mark and remember :  
Art thou indeed of the blood of my fathers and truly my offspring,  
See to it nobody learn that Odysseus is here in his homestead ;  
Neither Laertes himself may know of it, neither the swineherd ;  
None of the thralls of the palace, nor Penelopeia thy mother.  
Only shall I and thyself the fidelity test of the women,  
Ay and of some of the thralls make trial, to gain us assurance  
Whether of all still any remaineth that fears and respects us,

Which too payeth thee neither regard nor esteems thee as master."

*Odyssey*

XXI

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Him straightway then in answer addressed his illustrious offspring :  
" Father, methinks, right soon of the spirit that dwelleth within me  
Proof thou shalt have. Not at all light-minded frivolity guides me.  
Yea, but I deem thy intent would nowise bring an advantage  
Either to thee or to me ; and I urge thee to give it reflexion.  
Time thou wilt spend and in vain thus testing the thralls on the farm-lands  
Wandering round ; meanwhile these insolent fellows securely  
All our wealth in the palace devour, and the waste is unending.  
Still I exhort thee to gain us assurance concerning the women,  
Which of them honour thee not and which are guiltless among them.  
Going around to the steadings and testing the men I am truly  
Loth to advise. 'Twere easy to manage the matter hereafter,  
Art thou assured of a pledge from the Father that beareth the aegis."

While these twain held converse together the one with the other  
Nearing the Ithacan port was the well-built vessel that erstwhile  
Safely from Pylos had brought prince Telemachus and his comrades.  
These, when at last they arrived at the deep expanse of the harbour,  
High on the sands uphauling the black-hulled vessel they left her,  
While that the tackle was borne by a band of courageous attendants.  
Quickly to Clyti'us' mansion they carried the beautiful presents ;  
Then despatching a herald at once to the house of Odysseus  
Bade him to carry the message to wise-souled Penelopeia  
Telemachus had arrived at the farm and had bidden the vessel  
Keep on her course to the town, that the high-souled lady his mother  
Now might rest from her fears and the shedding incessant of teardrops.

These twain lighted the one on the other—the herald and swineherd—  
Both of them seeking the queen, with the selfsame news to impart her.  
So, when at last they arrived at the house of the glorious chieftain,  
First in the midst of the maiden attendants addressed her the herald :  
" Lady, I bring thee a message : thy son is arrived, thy beloved."  
Then came forward the swineherd and standing anigh her reported  
All of the message her son, her beloved, had bidden him give her ;  
Till, when at last he had ended the message enjoined by his master,  
Leaving the palace and garths, once more to his swine he betook him.

Now on the soul of the suitors astonishment fell and confusion.  
Out of the hall of the palace they passed by the wall of the courtyard.

*Odysseus* There on the benches they sat them adown in the front of the gateway.

*XVI* Eurymachus then began, prince Polybus' son, to address them :

"Comrades, truly a fine and an impudent deed hath accomplished Telemachus with this voyage we thought he'd never accomplish. Come, let us launch us a good black vessel, the best of the galleys, Ship then as rowers aboard of it seamen, who quickly as may be Word to the others shall carry at once to return to the city."

Not yet all he had uttered when, turning his head as he sat there, Amphinomus was aware of the ship in the bay of the harbour Lowering sail, and the oarage at rest in the hands of the rowers. So with a lightsome laughter he spake in the midst of his comrades : "Hurry is none for a message—Behold ! they are here in the harbour. Either a deity told them or else peradventure they sighted, While she was passing, the vessel, but were not able to catch her."

Thus did he speak, and arising they went to the shore of the ocean. Speedily here uphauling the black-hulled vessel they beached her, While that the tackle was borne by a band of courageous attendants. Thence in a body they fared to the place of assembly, and no one Either of youths or of elders besides they permitted to enter. Then rose Antinoüs, Eupeithes' son, to address them : "Lo now ! surely immortals delivered this fellow from evil ! Sentinels sat all day on the wind-swept height of a headland, Many and watching in turn, and at even, when set was the sunlight, Ne'er did we lay us to sleep on the shore, but afloat on the ocean Cruised in the swift-winged ship and awaited the sacred morning, Lying in wait for this fellow himself, to entrap and destroy him, Telemachus—whom a god meanwhile led homeward in safety. Come now, straight let us plan some violent death for this fellow Telemachus, nor again let him give us the slip—for I warrant Never as long as the lad is alive shall we settle this matter, Since he is clever himself, with a wit right ready at plotting, Nor do the people regard us with favour at all as aforetime. Come, let us do it before he has called the Achaeans together Unto a meeting ; for ne'er will he slacken his efforts, I warrant ; Nay he will wax in his wrath, and will rise in the council and tell them How that we wove for his sudden destruction but failed to ensnare him. Scarce will the people approve when they hear of the shameful proceedings ; Rather, I fear, they will bring some evil upon us and chase us Forth from this country of ours to the land of a nation of strangers.

Come, let us hasten to seize him, afar from the town on the farm-lands,  
Or on the road. Let us keep for ourselves his estate and his chattels,  
Parting them fairly amongst us, but leaving the right to the homestead  
Unto his mother and unto the man who shall win her in marriage.  
Should however the word I have spoken displease you, and should ye  
Wish him to live and be master of all his paternal possessions,  
Then no more let us eat of the pleasant stores of his substance,  
Gathering hither to feast ; let us each one out of his homestead  
Try with his presents to woo her as wife ; and at last she will marry  
Him that shall offer the most and is destined by heaven to win her."

So did he speak ; but they all sat utterly silent and speechless,  
Till prince Amphinomus made answer, and thus he addressed them  
(Famed was the prince, and his sire was the son of Aretias, Nisus ;  
Leading the suitors he came from the island of pasture and corn-land  
Dulichium, and in speech he was pleasing to Penelopeia  
Most of them all ; for in truth he was gifted with good understanding :)  
So with a kindly intent he arose and began to address them :  
"Never—to speak for myself, O friends—can I wish you to murder  
Telemachus. 'Tis a deed right dreadful to murder a person  
Royal of race. Nay, first let us ask for the counsel of heaven.  
Should the oracular answers of Zeus the Almighty approve it,  
Then will I kill him myself, or will urge all others to do so.  
Should the immortals oppose it, I bid you to cease from the project."

Thus spake Amphinomus, and his words found favour among them.  
So forthwith they arose and they went to the house of Odysseus.  
Entering here in the hall on the polished seats they reclined them.

Now did a new thought come to the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Even to stand in the sight of the lawless and insolent suitors,  
Since she had heard of the death of her son that was planned in the palace  
(Medon the herald informed her, who oft to the plottings had listened).  
So to the banqueting-hall she betook her amidst of her maidens,  
Till, when at last she had come to the suitors, that fairest of women  
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment  
Holding in front of her cheeks soft folds of her glistening head-dress ;  
Then she addressed her to Antinous and reproached and rebuked him :  
"Antinous, outrageous deviser of evil ! They call thee  
Here in the Ithacan people of all of thy fellows the foremost  
Both as a speaker and also as counsellor. Such thou wast never.



*Odyssey* Madman ! Wherefore art weaving for Telemachus his destruction,  
*XVI* Weaving his death, and regardest not suppliants having to help them  
*11-15* Zeus as a witness ? A terrible deed is to murder a comrade.  
Hast thou forgotten the time when thy sire fled hither for safety  
Fearing the people ? for truly exceedingly great was their anger,  
Since he had followed a band of the Taphian pirates and with them  
Harried Thesprotian folk, the allies of the Ithacan nation ;  
So they had vowed to destroy him—to tear him the heart from the body—  
Ay and to eat his estate—his abundant and splendid possessions.  
Then did Odysseus restrain them and curb them in spite of their fury ;  
Whose house now thou consum'st with impunity, wooing his consort,  
Slaying his son, and bringing on me an unspeakable sorrow.  
Nay but I bid thee to cease and to order the others to cease too."

Forthwith Eurymachus, prince Polybus' son, gave answer :  
"Daughter of Icarius, O wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Cease from thy fears, and let nought of this matter disquiet thy spirit.  
Nowhere liveth a man nor shall ever be born to existence  
Such as to raise 'gainst Telemachus thy belovéd a finger  
While on the earth I am living at least and beholding the sunlight.  
This will I venture to say, and it surely will find a fulfilment :  
Soon with the dark red blood of the man were dripping a spear-blade,  
Even my own ; for of old did Odysseus, the sacker of cities,  
Taking me oft on his knees from the roast some savoury morsel  
Set in my hands, and he held to my lips red wine in a goblet.  
Therefore is Telemachus most dear to me—even of all men  
Dearest ; nor needeth he fear, I assure him, that death shall assail him—  
Not from the suitors at least : none 'scapes when it cometh from heaven."

Thus did he comforting speak, but at heart he was plotting to slay him.  
Then she ascended again to her glistening upper apartment :  
Here she lamented Odysseus her lord, her belovéd, till softly  
Slumber delicious was poured on her eyes by the goddess Athene.

Now in the even to Telemachus and Odysseus the swineherd  
Came ; and he found them, the one and the other, preparing the supper  
After a pig had been slaughtered, a yearling. (Already Athene,  
Once more drawing anigh to Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Back with a stroke of her wand to an agéd beggar had changed him,  
Also had clad him in sorry apparel, for fear that the swineherd  
Seeing him there might know him and tell wise Penelopeia,  
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Hasting to take her the news, nor keep it concealed in his bosom.)  
First spake Telemachus to the swineherd, and thus he addressed him :  
“So thou art back, good friend ! Come, tell us the news of the city !  
Are they already arrived, those lordly and arrogant suitors,  
Back from the ambush, or still do they watch for my homeward returning ?”  
Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
“Nay but I cared not at all such tidings to seek and to ask for  
Lounging about in the town ; for the spirit within me was urgent,  
After my message was done, to depart right speedily homeward.  
Also I happened to meet with the messenger swift of thy comrades,  
Even thy herald, and he first told to thy mother the tidings.  
One thing more however I know—with my eyes I beheld it.  
Just as I reached in my faring the hill that is sacred to Hermes,  
Over the city, I sighted a swift-winged ship that was steering  
Into the Ithacan harbour with men right many aboard her ;  
Filled was the vessel with shields and it bristled with numberless spear-points.  
These were (so I imagined) the suitors ; but truly I know not.”

Thus did he speak, while smiling the stalwart son of Odysseus  
Looked in the eyes of his father, avoiding the gaze of the swineherd.

Now when at last they had finished their work and the supper was ready,  
Fell they a-feasting and sated their souls with the banquet abundant,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Then they bethought them of rest and accepted the blessing of slumber.



# ODYSSEY BOOK XVII

**N**OW when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered, Telemachus, loved son of the godlike hero Odysseus, Straightway under his feet bound firmly his beautiful sandals, Took then his stalwart spear, well fitting the grasp of his fingers, Meaning to start forthwith for the town; & hespake to his swineherd :  
“Well now, dad, I shall go to the city in order to show me Unto my mother, for never—of this I am sure—she will never Cease from her wretched bewailing and shedding of tears and lamenting Ere she beholdeth my face. Now list to the orders I give thee : This poor stranger I wish thee to guide to the city and bid him There go beg for his food, and let every one who is willing Reach him a crust and a cup ; but for me it is possible nowise All such beggars to house, for my spirit is burdened with sorrows. Should he be sorely offended thereat, he will only be making All of it worse for himself. I prefer to be open and truthful.”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Neither myself, O friend, am I wishful at all to be kept here, Since for a beggar it's better by far in the town than the country Begging his bread. I shall get it from every one that is willing. Nor am I longer, I trow, of an age to abide on a farmstead Where I shall need to obey the commands of a master in all things. Nay now, go on thy way. This man, as thou biddest, shall guide me, After I've thaw'd me a bit by the fire and the sunlight is warmer. Wearing a raiment so terribly tattered I fear to encounter Hoar-frost early a-morn; and ye said that the city is distant.”

Thus did he speak, and the youth went forth of the hut and the farmyard Striding apace ; and he sowed as he went ill doom for the suitors ; Till, when at last he arrived at the pleasant abode of his fathers, Taking the spear that he bore on a high roof-pillar he leaned it ; Over the threshold of stone then stepping he entered the mansion. Here was the first to behold him the old nurse Eurycleia, While she was strewing the seats and their delicate carvings with fleeces. Sobbing she hurried to meet him, and round him assembled the others, All of the women attendants of long-enduring Odysseus, Lovingly offering welcome and kissing his head and his shoulders. Then came forth of her chamber the wise-souled Penelopea,

(177) (SRP) Like to the daughter of Leto or Queen Aphrodite the golden,  
X 1 11 Fell on the neck of her child, her belov'd, and embraced him, and sobbing  
17 x 26 Kissed him on both of his cheeks, on his beautiful eyes and his forehead ;  
Then with a piteful cry these swift-winged words she addressed him :  
"Telemachus, sweet light of my eyes, thou art come ! and I thought not  
E'er to behold thee again when I knew thee departed for Pylos  
Secretly—ay and despite of my wishes—to seek for thy father.  
Ah but inform me at once : was a sign to be seen of his presence ?"  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
"Mother, arouse no wailing, I pray thee, nor stir in my bosom  
Sorrow of heart ! I am barely escapéd from utter destruction.  
Nay now, bathe thee in water and cast fresh raiment around thee,  
Then to thy upper apartment ascend with the women thy handmaids ;  
There make vows to perform to the gods sufficing oblation,  
Praying that Zeus may haply accomplish the work of requital.  
Now I shall go to the square and invite me a guest to the palace,  
Even a stranger who joined us when hither returning from Pylos.  
Him did I forward send with the rest of my goodly companions,  
Telling my mate Peiræus to take him as guest to his homestead,  
Yea and to treat him with care and with honour until my arrival."

Thus did he speak, and the word that he uttered abode with her wingless.  
Forthwith bathing in water she cast fresh raiment around her,  
Then made vows to perform to the gods sufficing oblation,  
Praying that Zeus might haply accomplish the work of requital.  
Telemachus straightway fared forth from the hall of the palace,  
Bearing a spear in his hand, and by dogs fleet-footed was followed.  
O'er him a wondrous beauty was shed by the goddess Athene,  
So that the folk all gazed in astonishment while he approached them.  
Round him at once there gathered a throng of the arrogant suitors  
Speaking him fair, while deep in their bosoms they brooded on evil.  
These however he shunned and the press of the people avoiding  
Came where Mentor was sitting with Antiphos and Halitherses,  
Friends still faithful as ever of yore to the house of his father.  
Here then he sat him adown ; and they asked him of all that had happened.

Now Peiræus approached, bold spearman, escorting the stranger  
Thorough the town to the place of the council ; nor longer a moment  
Telemachus held back from the stranger, but hastened to meet him.  
First however began Peiræus to speak and addressed him :  
"Telemachus, send some of thy maidens at once to my homestead,

So that they bring to thee all of the gifts of the prince Menelaus.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“Nay, Peiraeus, we know not as yet how all shall be ended.  
Should these arrogant suitors infesting the halls of my mansion  
Slay me by stealth, and divide my paternal possessions among them,  
Rather for thee to enjoy than for any of them be the presents !  
Should however I sow for the fellows death and destruction,  
Then shall I gladly permit thee to bring these gifts to my homestead.”

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These words uttered, he guided his wayworn guest to the palace,  
Till, when at last they arrived at the pleasant abode of his fathers,  
Laying aside their mantles of wool on the chairs and the couches,  
Into the bath with its tub well-polished they entered and washed them.  
Then, when the women had bathed them and rubbed them with oil of the olive,  
Throwing around them again soft woollen mantles and tunics,  
Out of the tub of the bath they returned and on couches reclined them.  
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer  
Beautiful, golden ; and over a basin of silver she poured it,  
Bidding them wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside them.  
Then did the grave house-dame bring bread, and she laid it before them,  
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.

Fronting the prince was his mother, anigh to the post of the doorway,  
Lying reclined on her couch, and a delicate thread she was spinning.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,  
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,  
Thus she began to address him, the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Telemachus, I shall now to my upper apartment ascending  
Lay me again on the bed that is ever the place of my groanings,  
Watered so oft by my tears from the day that Odysseus thy father  
Sailed with the lordly Atridae for Ilion. Yea, for thou car'st not,  
Ere that the arrogant suitors return to the hall of the palace,  
Plainly to tell me if aught thou hast heard of thy father's returning.”

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“Well now, mother, the whole of the truth I will fully relate thee.  
Firstly to Pylos we came, where Nestor, the prince of the people,  
Bidding me welcome as guest in his high-roofed palace received me,  
Lovingly treated me too, as a father his son that has wandered  
Long in a country of strangers and newly is come to his homeland.  
Lovingly thus by the king and his valiant sons I was treated.

Still, of my sire, stout-hearted Odysseus, as yet, he asserted,  
Whether as dead or alive, no mortal had given him tidings.  
Natheless unto the spearman renowned, Menelaus Atrides,  
Onward he sent me, and steeds and a strong-built car he provided.  
Here too Helen of Argos I saw, whose beauty so many  
Sufferings brought, by the will of the gods, on the Trojans and Argives.  
Forthwith questioned me then Menelaus good at the war-cry  
What was the wish that had led me to visit divine Lacedaemon ;  
Straight I replied and the whole of the truth to the prince I related.  
Then once more did he speak and thus he addressed me in answer :  
‘ Nay, by the gods ! in the bed of a man right valiant-hearted  
These have chosen a couch for themselves—poor cowardly creatures !  
E’en as it haps when a hind in the lair of a powerful lion  
Maketh a bed for her fawns, new-litter’d and delicate sucklings,  
Fares then forth to the slopes and the grassy ravines of the mountains  
Seeking for pasture—and lo, to his covert returning the lion  
Suddenly maketh of both of the yeanelings a terrible ending ;  
Thus shall a terrible ending be made of the men by Odysseus.  
Would that, by Father Zeus and Athena and Phoebus Apollo,  
Such as he proved when of yore in the flourishing island of Lesbos  
Fearless he met with the huge Philomeleides in a contest,  
Wrestled and heavily threw him, and all the Achaeans exulted ;  
Would that he came—e’en such an Odysseus—to visit the suitors,  
Bringing to all of them speedy perdition and nuptials of anguish !  
Now for the matter whereof thou dost ask and entreat me, I promise  
Nought will I wrest from the truth, nor evasively speak and deceive thee ;  
All that the ancient god of the sea—that prophet unerring—  
Told me, of this will I nought keep back nor attempt to conceal it.  
Once on an island, he said, he had seen him and suffering sorely,  
Held in the halls of Calypso the nymph ; and she still with compulsion  
Keepeth him there all hopeless of reaching the land of his fathers,  
Since no ship he possesses with oars well fitted or comrades  
Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.’  
Such words uttered the spearman renown’d Menelaus Atrides.  
This then finished I started again, and a favouring stern-breeze  
Sent by the gods soon wafted me back to the land of my fathers.”

Thus did he end, and his words moved deeply the heart in her bosom.  
Then did the seer divine Theoclymenus speak and address her :  
“ Lady and honoured wife of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
He knows nothing for certain ; but list to the word I shall utter :

Lo as a prophet I tell thee the truth nor will try to conceal it :  
First then witness it Zeus, and the table at which I am welcomed,  
Yea and the hearth to the which I am come of the noble Odysseus,  
Verily now already Odysseus is here in his homeland  
Resting or stealing around ; and of all these crimes he is learning ;  
Yea he is here, and is sowing disaster for all of the suitors,—  
Such was the omen that lately anigh to the well-decked vessel,  
Where I was sitting, I saw ; and to Telemachus I proclaimed it.”  
Him then in turn gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“ Ah and I would, O stranger, thy word might find a fulfilment !  
Quickly enough thou’dst know of my friendship, and many a present  
Out of my hands, and be envied of every mortal that met thee.”

Thus these three as they sat held converse one with another.  
Meantime sported the suitors in front of the hall of Odysseus  
Taking delight in the hurling of spears and in casting the discus,  
Using the levelled ground that was often the scene of their uproars,  
Till, when the season of supper was there and from every quarter  
Came from the pastures the sheep, with the men who conducted them alway,  
Then spake Medon the herald (the one that of all of the henchmen  
Pleased them the best and was aye in attendance whenever they feasted):  
“ Now, young masters, with sports all hearts are fully contented ;  
Get you again to the house, and a banquet we there will prepare us.  
Much do I know that is worse than enjoying a supper in season.”

Thus as he spake they arose and departed, obeying his summons.  
Then, when they all had arrived at the fair-built house of Odysseus,  
Laying aside their mantles of wool on the chairs and the couches,  
Straight of the sheep and the goats they began choice fatlings to slaughter,  
Slaughtered as well fat hogs, and they took of the cattle a heifer,  
Making them ready a feast.

But to start for the town from the farmstead  
Now did Odysseus and also the good old swineherd bestir them.  
Then of the twain first spake Eumaeus master of swineherds :  
“ Since thou art eagerly wishing, my friend, to be gone to the city  
Even to-day, as the master commanded—although for my own part  
I here far liefer I’d leave thee behind as a guard of the steading—  
Natheless, since I revere him and dread lest haply hereafter  
Words of rebuke he shall utter (it pains when a master reproves one),  
So come now let us start, for the day, as thou seest, is already



*Odyssey.* Fully advanced ; it will soon strike colder as even approacheth."

XII

*101-107* Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Ay but I know it, I know it, and well understand what thou wishest.  
Well—let us go ! Thou shalt guide me the whole of the way to the city.  
Give me a stick, I beseech thee, if one cut ready thou ownest,  
Such as to steady my steps ; for ye called it a treacherous footpath."  
These words spoken he slung on his shoulders the beggarly wallet,  
Terribly tattered and torn, with a twisted cord to suspend it,  
While Eumæus provided a staff—e'en such as he wished for.

Thus these twain fared forth ; but the dogs and the drivers remained there  
Guarding the farm, while down to the city he guided his master  
Under the form of a beggar, a man right wretched and aged,  
Staying his steps with a staff and invested in sorry apparel.

So when at last by a path full narrow and stony descending  
Nigh to the gate of the city they came, they arrived at a fountain  
Bountiful, basin'd in stone, whence water is drawn by the townsman  
(Ithacus built it, and Neritus later and also Polycctor).  
Round it a thicket of alders, that love to be nourished by moisture,  
Wholly encircled the spring ; and the clear cold water was falling  
Down from the height of a rock, and above was erected an altar  
Unto the nymphs, at the which all travellers made an oblation.  
Here did it hap that the goatherd Melanthius lighted upon them,  
Driving his goats—prime beasts for the food of the suitors selected,  
Chosen from all of the flocks. And he brought two drivers to help him.

Now as he saw those twain he reviled them, and loudly addressed them  
Words indecent and shocking that angered the heart of Odysseus :  
"Lo and behold ! E'en so ! One scoundrel is leading another !  
How it is true that a like and like heav'n bringeth together !  
Where art thou taking this gluttonous hog, thou detestable swincherd—  
Taking this pestilent knave of a beggar, this spoiler of banquets,  
One that for aye will be loafing and rubbing his shoulders on door-posts,  
Begging for morsels of meat ?—not, I trow, for a sword or a kettle !  
Shouldst thou allow me the lout to be left as a guard in my stead,  
Sweep me the stalls and supply to the kids fresh branches for fodder,  
Soon with the swelling of whey he'd grow him a thigh—and a fat one !  
Since however a right bad trade he hath learned, he will never  
Willingly set him to work, for the tramping and begging is doubtless



THE MEETING WITH MELANTHIUS



More to his mind, and to batten on doles his insatiate belly.  
Hark ! I will tell thee a thing that will certainly find a fulfilment :  
Should he attempt to approach to the palace of godlike Odysseus,  
Soon at his head will be hurled by the men full many a footstool,  
Barking his ribs, as around all over the palace they pelt him."

These words said, in his fury he kicked as he passed at Odysseus,  
Striking his hip—but to thrust him aside from the path it availed not.  
Steadily still he remained on the road, and he pondered in spirit  
Whether to rush at the fellow and flog him to death with his cudgel,  
Or by the ankles to lift him and shatter his skull on the roadway.  
Still he endured it, restraining his wrath ; and the swineherd in anger  
Glared at the man and uplifting his hands made loud invocation :  
" Daughters of Zeus, O Nymphs of the fountain, if ever Odysseus  
Offered you roasted oblation of thighs enwrapt in the caul-fat  
Either of rams or of kids, vouchsafe me this longing's fulfilment :  
O for the master himself to return ! Some deity bring him !  
Then shall he scatter to nothing the whole of thy vaunting and glory  
Which thou in arrogance bruittest abroad, down here in the city  
Loafing, and letting thy flocks by the knavish herdsmen be ruined."  
Him then in turn gave answer Melanthius master of goatherds :  
" Nay by the gods, just list to the bark of the venomous mongrel !  
Soon I shall get him aboard of a black-deck'd vessel and take him  
Far from the Ithacan isle, and a fortune fine he shall win me.  
Ay and for Telemachus—with his silvern bow may Apollo  
Smite him to-day ! Or I would that he died by the hands of the suitors,  
Seeing the day of return for Odysseus is vanished for ever."

These words uttered he left them, and leisurely footing they followed,  
While that he hastened before and arrived full soon at the palace,  
Straightway entered, and sat him adown in the midst of the suitors  
Opposite Eurymachus, who of all to his soul was the dearest.  
Quickly a portion of meat was conveyed to his side by the servants,  
While that the grave house-dame brought bread, and she set it before him  
Bidding him eat.

Meantime was Odysseus arrived with the swineherd.  
Nigh to the palace they halted, and music was wafted around them,  
Tones of a hollow lute ; for beginning to sing was the minstrel  
Phemius. Grasping his hand then spake to the swineherd Odysseus :  
" Sure, it is here, Eumaeus—the beautiful home of Odysseus !

*Odysseus* Yea and in sooth it is easily known midst many a mansion.  
*Athena* Buildings on buildings ! and see how skilfully planned is the courtyard !  
*Telemachus* Look at the wall and the coping of battlements ! Look at the portal,  
Double and massively barr'd ! 'Twould fear no arms of assailants !  
Also I ween that within is a company holding a revel,  
Many a man—for a savour is floating around us, and music,  
Tones of a lute, which heaven hath wedded as consort to banquets.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
“Easily guessed !—and in sooth ere now not a fool thou appearedst.  
Well now, come, let us think how next we shall act in the matter.  
Either do thou first enter the pleasant abodes of the palace  
Unto the throng of the suitors, and I outside will await thee,  
Else, if it pleaseth thee more, stay here, and as first I will enter.  
Long however remain not, for fear lest any beholding  
Pelt thee and drive thee away. Now think what is best, I beseech thee.”

Forthwith answering spake long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“Ay but I know it, I know it, and well understand what thou wishest.  
Well then, thou be the foremost to enter ; I here will await thee.  
Verily neither of missiles nor blows am I lacking in knowledge !  
Hardened in sooth is my heart—so many a hardship I suffered  
Tossed on the sea and the billows of war. Now this shall be added !  
Also an ill one never can hide is a ravening belly,  
Thing accursed that brings on a man right many misfortunes ;  
Yea, it is nought but the belly that full-benched vessels equippeth,  
Vessels that over the waste of the sea bear doom to the foeman.”

While these twain stood thus conversing the one with the other  
Nigh them a dog uplifted his head and his ears as he lay there,  
E'en old Argus, the dog whom long-enduring Odysseus  
Bred for himself—but in vain. To the sacred town of the Trojans  
Ere he had trained him he went ; and at first young fellows had led him  
After the goats of the mountain to hunt, and the hares, and the roe-deer ;  
Then neglected he lay, in the years when his master was absent,  
Making his bed of the muck that was piled in the front of the portal,  
Even the dung of the mules and the oxen, before it was carried  
Out to the fields of the farm by the thralls of Odysseus to dung them.  
There he was lying—the poor old Argus, infested with vermin.  
Yet e'en now, as he looked and was ware that his master was present,  
Both of his ears down-dropping and wagging his tail he attempted  
Nearer to come to Odysseus his lord, but was wholly unable

Thither to creep ; and Odysseus averted his eyes as he saw it,  
Drying a tear, that he easily hid from the swineherd, and asked him :  
“Sure, Eumaeus, ’tis strange that the dog should lie on a dunghill.  
Goodly in form he appears ; but indeed one knows not for certain  
Whether he also had fleetness of foot with a beautiful body,  
Or if he only was like to a hound that is fed from the table,  
Such as so often is kept by the rich on account of his beauty.”

Him then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
“Nay, ’tis the dog of a man that is perished afar from his homeland.  
Were he again to be gifted with bodily power and prowess,  
Were he the dog that was left by Odysseus when sailing for Troyland,  
Soon at the sight of his strength thou’dst marvel and also his swiftness.  
E’en in the uttermost depths of the forest was known to escape him  
Never a brute that he chased—for at following trail he was peerless.  
Now he is fallen on days right evil : his master is perished  
Far from his home, and the maids are too neglectful to tend him.  
Such is a thrall when his lord no longer commands in the household !  
Ne’er is he willing to work at his duty as honesty bids him.  
Half of his worth doth the Father of heaven who speaketh in thunder  
Take from a man when the day of captivity cometh upon him.”

These words spoken, he entered the pleasant abodes of the palace.  
Straight to the hall he betook him and came to the arrogant suitors,  
While that the doom and the darkness of death descended on Argus,  
Just as again, in the twentieth year, he had welcomed his master.

Now as the swineherd was making his way in the midst of the mansion  
Godlike Telemachus was the first to perceive him, and forthwith  
Beckoned to bid him approach ; and he looked for a settle and found one  
Standing unused, where wont to be seated at feasts was the carver  
While he was portioning messes abundant of meat for the suitors.  
This he uplifted and bore to the side of the table and placed it  
Opposite Telemachus ; and he sat him adown ; and a henchman  
Served him a portion of meat, and of bread that he took from a basket.

After him soon now followed Odysseus and entered the palace  
Under the form of a beggar, a man right wretched and aged,  
Staying his steps with a staff and invested in sorry apparel.  
Down on the threshold of ash inside of the portal he sat him,  
Leaning himself on the pillar of cypress, that erst by the joiner

(11) *11. 337* Smoothly was planed and was cut to the line with the skill of a master.

XVI

11. 338

Telemachus now called to the swineherd to come, and addressed him,  
Taking the whole of a loaf from the midst of a beautiful basket,  
Also as much of the meat as to grasp in his hands he was able :  
“ Carry and give this food to the stranger, and also advise him  
Making the round of the table entreat each one of the suitors,  
Seeing it profiteth nought for a mortal in want to be shamefaced.”  
Thus did he speak, and the swineherd obeying, as soon as he heard it,  
Came close up to the man and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Telemachus sends this to thee, stranger, and bids me advise thee  
Making the round of the table entreat each one of the suitors,  
Seeing it profiteth nought for a beggar (he saith) to be shamefaced.”  
Forthwith answering spake these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ King of the gods, great Zeus, grant Telemachus to be happy  
Here amid men, and to gain all blessings his soul desireth.”

Thus did he speak, and in both of his hands he received it, and laid it  
Down at his feet, outspreading beneath it his beggarly wallet.  
Now as he ate, once more to the feasters the singer was singing,  
Till, when at last he had dined and the godlike singer had ended,  
Clamour was raised in the hall by the suitors.

But Pallas Athene,

Taking her stand by the side of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Urgently moved him to go and to gather him crusts from the suitors,  
So as to learn which men were just, which lawless among them  
(Yet e'en so she was minded to save not one from destruction).  
So from the right he began and in turn each man he entreated,  
Holding his hand for a dole, like one long practised in begging.  
Now while moved by compassion they gave, and beheld him with wonder,  
Each one questioning, “ Who is the fellow, and where did he come from ? ”  
Thus in the midst addressed them Melanthius master of goatherds :  
“ List to my words, O suitors of far-famed Penelopeia,  
Touching this stranger !—Methinks ere now I've certainly seen him.  
Ay, it is even the beggar the swineherd hither was guiding !  
Whence he is come, and the folk that he boasts to belong to, I know not.”

Forthwith Antinous outspake upbraiding the swineherd :  
“ Ah, thou notorious swineherd ! and wherefore here to the city  
Bringst thou the man ? Dost fancy us lacking in vagrants already,  
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Lacking in plenty of pestilent beggars and spoilers of banquets?  
Deemst thou it nought that the wealth of thy lord is consumed by a rabble  
Gathering here in his halls, that thou callst this fellow to join them?"  
Him straightway then in answer addressed Eumaeus the swineherd:  
"Antinous, thou art brave, but thy words are truly ignoble.  
Where is the man goes searching around for a guest and invites him,  
Other than one of the craftsmen that work for the weal of the people,  
Either a prophet, a healer of ills, or a master of woodcraft,  
Ay or a singer divine, to delight with his singing the feasters?  
Over the whole wide world such guests are bidden to banquets,  
While—what mortal inviteth a beggar to come and annoy him?  
Ah but thou ever wast hard—and of all of the suitors the hardest—  
Unto the thralls of Odysseus, and specially me! . . . But I care not . . .  
Care not a whit . . . so long as the wise-souled Penelopeia  
Lives in the halls of her palace, and Telemachus the heroic."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Silence, I beg! It is useless to waste more words in replying.  
Antinous is accustomed for ever to chide and to quarrel,  
Using the bitterest taunts, wherewith he inciteth the others."  
Turning to Antinous then swift-winged words he addressed him:  
"Antinous, it is finely thou car'st for me like to a father,  
Bidding me chase this stranger away from the hall of my homestead,  
Ay and to force him with threats!—May God forfend that I do so!  
Come, take something and give it! I grudge not the gift; I enjoin it.  
Pay not regard to my mother herein, nor to any besides her,  
Any attendant that serves in the palace of godlike Odysseus!  
Nay but I know such thoughts have never a place in thy bosom:  
Liefar by far thou'dst ever be eating than give to another."

Him prince Antinous addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Telemachus, big boaster, unbridled in fury, what prat'st thou?  
Were but the rest of the suitors to make him the present that I shall,  
Verily three good months your house would mourn for his absence."  
Seizing a stool, as he spake, he displayed it from under the table,  
Where it was set as support for his smooth-skinned feet as he feasted.

All of the rest now offered a bounty, and soon was the wallet  
Filled with the bread and the meat; and Odysseus, although he was minded  
Straight to the threshold returning to taste of the gift of the princes,  
Halted by Antinous, as he passed, and accosted him, saying:

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“ Give to me, friend !—for thou seemst not the worst of the noble Achaeans,  
Nay but the best of them all. Thou art like to a monarch among them.  
So it behoves thee to give me a still more generous portion  
E’en than the others ; and over the whole wide world I will laud thee.  
Once I was owner of house and of home, and was held by my fellows  
Rich in estate, and was wont full often to give to a vagrant,  
Every beggar, whatever he seemed and whatever he wanted.  
Many and many a thrall I possessed and abundance of all things  
Such as allow of an easy existence and rich reputation.  
Then I was ruined by Father Cronion. I ween that he willed it,  
Since it was he who enrolled me with robbers that rove on the ocean  
Sailing for Egypt—a land far distant and doomed to destroy me.  
Here, in the river of Egypt I stationed my twy-beaked galleys ;  
Then did I issue an order to all of my trusty companions  
Quietly there to remain by the side of the vessels and guard them,  
While that I sent forth scouts to explore from the neighbouring outlooks.  
Yielding however to wanton desires and to arrogant boldness  
Soon they invaded the beautiful fields of the people of Egypt,  
Wasting the country and taking away both women and children,  
Slaughtering also the men ; and the cry reached quickly the city.  
These then, hearing the shout, as the new-born day was appearing,  
Came, and the whole of the plain seemed full of the footmen and horses,  
Full of the flashing of bronze ; and the god that delighteth in thunder  
Cast on my comrades a panic so fearful that none had the courage  
Firmly to stand and to face them—for danger was pressing on all sides.  
Now of my friends with the edge of the sword full many they slaughtered,  
Many they captured, and led them away to the labours of bondmen.  
Me to a stranger that met us they sold, and he took me to Cyprus,  
Dmetor descended from Jasus, a powerful Cyprian chieftain.  
Thence I escaped, and am hither arrived in the sorest affliction.”

Forthwith Antinous uplifting his voice made answer :  
“ Which of the deities sent us this nuisance, this bane of the banquet !  
Get thee away to the midst of the hall and apart from my table,  
Lest thou shalt come to an Egypt of anguish and Cyprus of sorrow !  
Why—what a shameless, audaciously impudent beggar thou seemest,  
Worrying each one after the other ! And truly they load thee  
Recklessly, neither withholding the hand nor withheld by a scruple,  
Giving the goods of another ; and plenty they keep for themselves too !”

Stepping a little aback deep-plotting Odysseus addressed him :

"Nay by the gods, thou'rt lacking in soul though noble in aspect.  
Never a morsel of salt thou'dst give to the poor at thy doorway,  
Seeing that feasting thy full at the board of another thou wiltst not  
Break me a mouthful of bread, though plenty is lying before thee."

*Odyssey*

*Book*

*Book 1*

Thus did he speak ; but the man with a heart more maddened to fury  
Glared at Odysseus askance, and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
" Now no longer, I vow, shalt thou hope to escape or unpunished  
Out of the hall make good thy retreat—for thou utterest insults."

These words spoken he seized on the stool, and he hurled it and struck him  
Under the shoulder atop of the back on the right ; but he stood there  
Firm as a rock, nor staggered at all by the stroke of the missile,  
Silently shaking his head as a man that is brooding on evil,  
Back to the threshold returned, and he sat him adown, and beside him  
Laying the well-filled wallet he spake these words to the suitors :  
" List to my words, O suitors of far-famed Penelopeia,  
While that I utter a thing that the heart in my bosom enjoins me.  
Never a pain or a grief would enter the soul of a fighter  
Should he be smit by the foe while warding them off his possessions,  
Fighting perchance in defence of his white-wool'd sheep or his cattle.  
Antinous for the sake of the pitiful belly hath struck me,  
Thing accurséd, that bringeth on men such numberless evils.  
Now if in heaven be gods of the beggar, or any Avengers,  
Ere he shall wed may death put an end to the man and his marriage."  
Then spake Antinous, Euphithes' son, and addressed him :  
" Sit thou in silence, my friend, and attend to thy food—or depart hence—  
Lest that because of the words thou hast uttered my youngers shall drag thee  
Forth by the hand or the foot and shall strip thee thy skin from thy body."

Thus spake Antinous ; but his words exceedingly angered  
All of the rest, one arrogant youth and another exclaiming :  
" Antinous, 'tis ignoble to strike an unfortunate beggar.  
Lo, thou art doomed—if indeed there liveth a god in the heavens ;  
Yea and we know that the gods in the likeness of pilgrims and strangers  
Many disguises assume as they visit the cities of mortals,  
Keeping a watch on the deeds of the lawless and those of the righteous."  
Such words uttered the suitors ; but little he recked of their prating.  
Telemachus meanwhile great grief in his bosom was nursing,  
Seeing the blow ; but the fall of a tear he restrained, and he sat there  
Silently shaking his head as a man that is brooding on evil.

*Odyssey*

*Book II*

*Lines 1-100*

Now ere long it was heard by the wise-souled Penelopeia  
How that the stranger was struck in the hall, and she spake mid her maidens :  
“Also be thou so smit by the glorious archer Apollo !”  
Then did the house-dame Eurynomé thus answer her, saying :  
“O for a speedy fulfilment of all our curses upon them !  
None would ever again see Morning enthroned in her glory.”  
Her then addressing in turn spake wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Yea, nurse, all of the men do I hate with their evil devices,  
Specially Antinous ; as the darkness of death I detest him.  
Lo, an unfortunate stranger was roaming around in the palace  
Begging an alms of the men, for necessity urged him to do so.  
Now though all of the rest gave fully and willingly, this man  
Smote him behind with a stool on the right at the base of the shoulder.”

While now thus she was speaking amidst of her women attendants  
Up in her chamber, Odysseus was making a meal of the viands.  
Then to the good old swineherd she called to approach, and addressed him :  
“Good Eumaeus, I pray thee to go and to order the stranger  
Hither to come ; I am wishful to give him a welcome and ask him  
Whether perchance he has heard of the long-enduring Odysseus ;  
Ay and perhaps he has seen him—for far, as it seems, he has wandered.”

Her then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
“Ah that the princely Achaeans a while would cease from their clamour !  
Such is the charm of his words ’twould ravish thy heart with enchantment.  
Three nights long did I keep him and three days granted him shelter  
There in my hut, where first he had come when he fled from the vessel ;  
Still, not yet had he ended relating his tale of misfortune.  
E’en as a listener gazeth entranced on a bard as he singeth,  
One that hath learn’d from immortals a strain of enrapturing beauty,  
So that the hearer remains all motionless, longing to listen,  
Thus was I charmed by his words as he sat by my side in my homestead.  
Well, he avoweth his friendship of yore with the house of Odysseus ;  
Says that his home was in Creta, the land of the offspring of Minos ;  
Thence, he asserts, he is come, and has met full many a hardship,  
Wandering further and further ; and vows that he heard of Odysseus,  
Not in a far-off land, but the rich Thesprotian country,  
Ay and alive—and he brings to his home full many a treasure.”

Him then in turn gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Go now, summon him here to my presence, to tell me his story,

While these men . . . let them sit by the portal and ply their amusements—  
Nay, all over my house—as their soul seems fain to be merry !  
Houses they have of their own and possessions untouched by the spoiler,  
Viands and sweet pure wine in abundance to nourish the household,  
Natheless every day to the halls of my palace resorting,  
Slaughtering also my sheep and my fat-fed goats and my oxen,  
Ever they revel in banquets, carousing on glittering red wine  
Recklessly ; great is the waste, and a man no longer is present,  
Such as Odysseus of yore, to avert this curse from the homestead.  
Should however Odysseus return to the land of his fathers,  
Soon with the aid of his son these insolent men he will punish.”

E'en as she spake loud sneezed prince Telemachus, and the mansion  
Echoed in wondrous wise, and the queen outbreking in laughter  
Hastily turned to the swineherd and swift-winged words she addressed him :  
“Go, I entreat thee, and summon the stranger to come to my presence.  
Didst not perceive that my son sneezed loud at the words that I uttered ?  
Wherefore a full and an utter destruction shall come on the suitors,  
All of them—all ! Not one shall escape from his doom and perdition.  
Also a thing will I say, which carefully mark and remember :  
Should I for certain perceive he is telling me truthfully all things,  
Then I shall clothe him in beautiful raiment, in mantle and tunic.”

Thus did she speak, and the swineherd departing, as soon as he heard it,  
Nigh to Odysseus approached, and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Stranger and father, behold, wise Penelopeia invites thee,  
Even the mother of Telemachus ; she is moved in her spirit  
Something to ask thee concerning her lord, though long she hath mourned him.  
Should she for certain perceive thou art telling her truthfully all things,  
Then she will clothe thee in mantle and tunic, the which thou art needing  
Mostly for all. Thou art sure to suffice for the needs of thy stomach  
Begging thy bread of the people—from each that is willing to help thee.”  
Him then in answer addressed long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“Yea, Eumaeus, and all of the truth were quickly related  
Unto the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelopeia.  
Well do I know of his story ; we suffered affliction together.  
Still, I am somewhat afraid of the throng of the arrogant suitors,  
Whose fierce insolence reacheth aloft to the brazen heaven.  
Thus this man just now . . . I was going around in the palace  
Nowise doing him harm, but he struck me and grievously hurt me ;  
Neither by Telemachus was I aided nor yet by the others.

Wherefore to Penelopeia announce 'twere best in her chamber  
Still to remain, though great be her longing, till after the sunset ;  
Then she can ask me concerning her lord and his day of returning,  
Letting me sit still nearer the hearth, as my raiment is truly  
Wretched—thou know'st it thyself ; for of thee first begged I assistance."

Thus did he speak, and the swineherd, departing as soon as he heard it,  
Over the threshold was stepping, when Penelopeia addressed him :  
" Why, Eumaeus, thou bringest him not ! What meaneth the vagrant ?  
Feeleth he fear unduly for any ? or else in the palace  
Feeleth he shame ? For a beggar it profiteth ill to be shamefaced."  
Her then in answer addressed these words Eumaeus the swineherd :  
" Nay but he speaketh aright—and he feeleth as many another,  
Wishing to keep him aloof from the insults of men overbearing.  
So he enjoins thee to stay in thy chamber till after the sunset.  
Ay and for thee, O Queen, it is better by far and is wiser  
Thus to converse with the stranger alone, and to list to his story."  
Him then in turn gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
" Nowise wanting in wits is the stranger, whoever he may be.  
Not on the earth, I believe, can be found in the races of mortals  
Men so wanton as these or that plot such wicked devices."

Such was the answer she gave ; and the good old swineherd departing  
Unto the throng of the suitors, as soon as his message was ended,  
Hastened to Telemachus and with swift-winged words he addressed him,  
Holding his head right close, to be noticed by none of the others :  
" Friend, I am going—to see to the swine and the things at the farmstead,  
Even thy living and mine. See thou to the things at the palace.  
Firstly of all see well to thyself, and consult with thy spirit,  
Lest some evil befall. Thou art hated of many Achaeans.  
Zeus confound them before that they bring some mischief upon us !"  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
" Ay, dad, thus it shall stand. Start homeward after thy supper ;  
Then in the morning return and bring fat beasts for oblation.  
All things else shall be managed by me and the blessed immortals."

Thus did he speak, and again on the well-carved settle the swineherd  
Sat him, and took of the meat and the drink to his soul's satisfaction.  
Then to his swine he departed, and quitted the hall and the gardens,  
All of them full of the throng of the feasters with music and dancing  
Making them merry—for nigh was approaching already the twilight.



# ODYSSEY BOOK XVIII

**N**OW there came to the palace a well-known beggar, who alway  
Begged in the Ithacan town. He was famed for his ravenous belly.  
Endless his eating and drinking; but no great strength had the fellow,  
Neither endurance, although right big was the bulk of his body.  
Once was his name Arnaeus. The lady his mother had called him  
So from his birth; but the youths all gave him the title of Irus,  
Since that he willingly went on a message whene'er he was bidden.  
He now came, and attempted to drive from his palace Odysseus,  
Uttering threats and abuse, and with swift-winged words he addressed him:  
"Get thee agone, old man—or be dragged by the feet—from the doorway!  
Canst thou not see that they all are nodding and winking to bid me  
Drag thee away? Natheless I am half unwilling to do so.  
Up with thee! up! or the quarrel is like to be settled by fighting."

Glaring askance at the man deep-plotting Odysseus addressed him:  
"Nay, good sir, I am harming thee nothing by word or by action.  
Ne'er will I grudge it if any shall give thee a dole—and a large one.  
Sure there's room for us both on the threshold, and surely thou needst not  
Envy the luck of another. Thou seemest a beggar and vagrant,  
E'en as myself; and we look to the gods to vouchsafe us a blessing.  
Challenge me not to a fray too hotly, nor rouse me to anger,  
Lest that in spite of my age on thy breast and thy lips I shall paint thee  
Red with thy blood. And indeed 'twould save me from further annoyance  
Now and to-morrow, for truly methinks thou'dst dream of returning  
Never again to the house of Odysseus the son of Laertes."

Then to a fury aroused thus answered him Irus the vagrant:  
"Nay by the gods, how glibly he talks, this gluttonous porker!  
Like to a crone that attends to an oven! I'll work him a mischief—  
Slog him with both of my fists, and the whole of his teeth I will knock clean  
Out of his jaws—as the tusks of a hog that has ravaged a cornfield.  
Gird thee! and all of the men here present shall judge of the matter,  
Viewing us fight. I will teach thee to box with a man that is younger!"

Thus these twain in the front of the high hall door of the mansion,  
Over the smooth-worn threshold, provoked each other to anger.  
Now when the powerful prince, lord Antinous, had perceived it,  
Sweetly and loudly he laughed, and he spake to the suitors around him:



"Comrades, here is a thing that has happened never aforetime!  
Such an amusement as never before God sent to the palace!  
Look at the stranger and Irus! The one is inciting the other  
Unto a contest of fists! Come! Quick! Let us set them a-fighting."

Scarce had he uttered the words, all leapt to their feet and with laughter  
Gathered around and encircled the raggedly raimented beggars.  
Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed them:  
"Listen, ye high-born suitors, I pray! I will make a proposal.  
There on the hearth are lying the stomachs of goats, that for supper  
Ready we laid, well filled with the blood of the beasts and the caul-fat.  
Now of the twain whichever shall conquer and prove him the better,  
He shall advance and shall take of the stomachs the one that he chooseth;  
He too alway shall join us at feasts, nor shall ever another  
Beggar be present or e'er be permitted to sue for a pittance."  
Thus spake Antinous, and his words pleased all of the others.

Then with a crafty intent deep-plotting Odysseus addressed them:  
"Friends, it is hopeless, I know, to contest with a man that is younger,  
Since I am old and outworn with my woes; but the belly compels me,  
Maker of mischief that bringeth upon me defeat and a flogging.  
Come now, all of you swear me an oath and a solemn assurance  
None shall in favour of Irus, uplifting a hand to assail me,  
Wantonly strike me a blow and oblige me to yield to the fellow."  
Thus did he speak, and they all of them swore to refrain, as he bade them.  
Then, when at length they had given the oath and had finished the plighting,  
Once more spake in the midst prince Telemachus and addressed him:  
"Stranger, if truly thy heart and thy valiant spirit command thee  
Thus to defend thee against him, be fearful of none of the nobles,  
Since not only with one shall he fight, whoever shall strike thee.  
Host of the banquet am I; these chieftains also approve it,  
Antinous and Eurymachus—both noted for wisdom."

Thus did he speak, and they all consented thereto; and Odysseus  
Girded his loins with his rags, and his sinewy thighs he uncovered  
Goodly and great; and the vast broad shoulders appeared, and the mighty  
Chest and the arms. (At his side once more was the goddess Athene  
Giving again their strength to the limbs of the prince of the people.)  
Forthwith every suitor was filled with exceeding amazement,  
While that the one, as he gazed, spake thus to another beside him:  
"Irus, un-Irus'd, will soon be imbibing the broth he was brewing!"



ODYSSEUS AND IRUS



Look at the old man's thigh that is showing from under his tatters !”  
Thus did they speak, and the spirit of Irus was seized by a panic.  
Yet e'en so he was girt by the servants and brought with compulsion  
Utterly cowed, with the flesh on his limbs all quaking in terror.  
Then spake Antinous and reproached him and loudly rebuked him :  
“ Better it were thou hadst died—nay, ne'er been living—thou bully,  
Since thou art terribly fear'd by the fellow and quakest to meet him,  
Though he is old and outworn with the misery fallen upon him.  
Now will I tell thee a thing that will certainly find a fulfilment :  
Should this fellow prevail in the combat and prove him the better,  
Into a black-hulled ship I shall cast thee at once and shall send thee  
Over to Echetus, lord of the mainland and maimer of mortals ;  
Then with the merciless steel he will shear thee thy nose and thy ears off,  
Tear from thy body thy vitals and cast them to dogs to be fought for.”

So as he spake still more did the man's limbs tremble in terror.  
Thus to the ring he was brought, and with hands uplifted they stood there.  
Now at the first was in doubt long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Whether to smite him a stroke to deprive him of life as it felled him,  
Or with a moderate blow of the fist on the earth to extend him.  
Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better,  
Lightly to strike—for he feared to be known to the princely Achaeans.  
So they uplifted their hands. First Irus a blow on the shoulder  
Planted ; but under the ear on the neck he was smitten, and inward  
Crushed was the bone, and at once from his mouth red blood was a-spouting.  
Moaning he fell in the dust and, his teeth tight-clenching together,  
Drummed with his heels on the ground as he lay ; and the arrogant suitors  
Dying for laughter uplifted their hands in delight ; but Odysseus  
Hauled him away by the feet from the doorway and into the courtyard,  
Right to the gates of the porch, and there by the wall of the courtyard  
Set him and propped him, and placed in the hands of the fellow a cudgel.  
Then upraising his voice these swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Sit now here as a scare for the pigs and the dogs ! I advise thee  
Never again to attempt o'er strangers and beggars to lord it,  
Meddlesome fool, lest haply befall thee a greater misfortune.”

These words spoken, he slung on his shoulders the beggarly wallet,  
Terribly tattered and torn ; and thereon was a cord to suspend it.  
Then to the threshold returning he sat him adown ; and the suitors  
Merrily laughing re-entered the palace and gave him a welcome :  
“ Zeus vouchsafe, O stranger, and other immortals, to grant thee

All of thy dearest desires—yea, all that thy spirit can long for,  
Since thou hast stopped this insatiate fellow from playing the vagrant  
Here in the Ithacan land. So now right soon we shall ship him  
Over to Echetus, king of the mainland and maimer of mortals.”  
Thus did they speak, and the godlike Odysseus rejoiced at the omen.

Antinous now laid at his side of the stomachs a great one  
Filled with the blood and the fat of the goats, while Amphinomus too  
Lifted a couple of loaves from the basket and placed them beside him,  
Then from a goblet of gold drank welcome and weal to him, saying :  
“Hail to thee, stranger and father ! I wish thee for ever in future  
Happier days—since now thou art holden of many misfortunes.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Amphinomus, as it seems, thou art verily gifted with wisdom,  
E’en as thy father—for oft did I hear of his high reputation,  
Nisus of Dulichium, as a man that was brave and was wealthy.  
Being, they say, his son thou art like him in good understanding.  
So I will tell thee the truth : attentively listen and mark me.  
Nothing is nourished by earth more utterly feeble than man is,  
Nothing of all that is breathing on earth and is creeping upon it.  
‘Verily never,’ he saith to himself, ‘shall I suffer misfortune  
While God granteth me manhood and still are supple my knee-joints.’  
Ay but whenever affliction is sent by the blessed immortals  
All, though sorely unwilling, he bears with a heart of endurance.  
Such forsooth is the mind of an earth-born mortal : it changes  
E’en as the Father of men and of gods sends seasons of fortune.  
I too once had the hope to be blest in the world, but committed  
Many infatuate deeds in the pride of my arrogant temper,  
Trusting moreover my father and also my brothers to help me.  
Wherefore ne’er is it wise for a man to be lawless, but rather  
Quietly all to enjoy, whatsoe’er the immortals shall give him.  
Thus an infatuate deed I behold these suitors committing,  
Wantonly wasting the wealth of a man and insulting his consort,  
Yea and a man that, I ween, not afar from his friends and his homeland  
Long shall remain. He is even at hand ! Some deity lead thee  
Safely away to thy home, lest here in his palace thou haply  
Meet him whene’er he returns to the well-loved land of his fathers,  
Since not bloodless (or much I mistake) will they part from the combat,  
He and the suitors, whene’er he shall enter the halls of his homestead.”

These words spoken, he poured of the wine honey-sweet a libation,  
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Emptied the goblet and handed it back to the warrior chieftain.  
He thro' the palace returned, with his heart sore troubled within him,  
Bowing his head ; for in sooth in his spirit he boded of evil.  
Yet e'en so he escaped not his doom : him too did Athene  
Destine to death by the hands and the spear of the son of Odysseus.  
Then did he seat him again on the chair from the which he had risen.

Now was a thought vouchsafed by the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Unto the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelopeia,  
E'en to appear to the suitors and make all hearts at her beauty  
Open with rapture as never before—since thus she was minded  
Still more honour to win from her lord and her son than aforesaid.  
So with a lightsome laugh to her woman she called and addressed her :  
“Euryomé, in my heart is a longing as ne'er I remember,  
Under the gaze of the suitors to stand, though truly I hate them.  
Also a rede to my son will I give that will tend to his welfare—  
Not to consort too oft with the band of the arrogant suitors,  
Seeing they speak fair words while secretly brooding on evil.”  
Then did the house-dame Eurynomé thus answer her saying :  
“Ay, it is verily wisely and well thou hast spoken, my daughter.  
Go to thy child and impart him thy wish, nor attempt to conceal it ;  
Not howbeit before thou hast bathed and thy face is anointed ;  
Not like this, with thy cheeks allstained by thy tears, I beseech thee !  
Go ! for it profiteth little to mourn thus ever and alway.  
Yea and thy son, he is now of an age to be wise—and of heaven  
This was thy dearest demand, with a beard on his chin to behold him.”

Her then in turn gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Euryomé, I beseech thee, refrain, though urged by affection,  
Giving me comfort and bidding me bathe and anoint me with unguents.  
All of the pride of my beauty the gods who inhabit Olympus  
Withered as soon as my lord in the hollow ships had departed.  
Seek now Autoñoë and Hippodameia, and bid them  
Hither to come ; in the hall I am wishful to have them beside me ;  
Never alone to the men will I go, since shyness forbids it.”  
Thus did she speak, and her woman departing from out of the chamber  
Went to the maidens, to give them the message and hasten their coming.

Now did a new thought come to the grey-eyed goddess Athene.  
Over the daughter of Icarius sweet slumber diffusing  
Backward she made her to sink, and with joints all loosened she lay there

*Odyssey* Stretched on her couch. Meanwhile, as she slumbered, the beautiful goddess  
XIII Gifts ambrosial gave her, to dazzle the eyes of the princes.  
700-727 First, to her features fair new beauty and brighter she added,  
Such as the bloom immortal with which fair-crowned Cytherea  
Gleameth whenever she goes to the beautiful dance of the Graces.  
Taller moreover she made her in stature and larger in person,  
Whiter she made her of skin than is fresh-sawn ivory's whiteness.  
After that thus she had wrought she departed, the beautiful goddess.

Then did the white-armed maidens approach from the women's apartment,  
Talking aloud as they came ; and at once sweet slumber released her.  
Rubbing her cheeks with her hands, these words half wakened she murmured :  
“ Sure in my weary affliction a deep soft trance overcame me !  
Would that as gentle a death pure Artemis willed to vouchsafe me  
Now on the spot ! No more would mourning and grief in my spirit  
Wither the days of my life, as I wail for my well-loved husband's  
Manifold courage and skill, who was peerless among the Achaeans.”

Spake, and began to descend from her glistening upper apartment ;  
Neither alone did she go : two handmaids followed behind her.  
Now when at last she had come to the suitors, that fairest of women  
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment,  
Holding in front of her cheeks soft folds of her glistening head-dress,  
While to the right and the left stood one of her faithful attendants.  
Straight were loosened the knees of the men, and enraptured by passion  
Each one uttered a prayer to the gods to possess her in marriage.  
Then to her well-loved son, prince Telemachus, she addressed her :  
“ Telemachus, no more is thy mind and thy thought to be trusted.  
E'en as a boy in thy thoughts thou wast guided with greater discretion.  
Now thou art grown so tall and art come to the measure of manhood,  
So that a stranger beholding thy beauty of person and stature  
Sure would deem thee a son of a wealthy and fortunate father ;  
Yet no more is thy mind and thy judgment right as aforetime.  
Lo, what deed thou hast caused to be wrought in the hall of thy palace,  
Thus permitting a stranger to suffer injurious usage !  
How if the stranger, who here as a guest in the home of thy fathers  
Quietly sat, some damage received from his grievous maltreatment ?  
Thine were wholly the shame and disgrace in the judgment of all men.”

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“ Mother, I take it amiss nowise that herein thou art angered.



Well am I able within me to reason, and well to distinguish  
Better from worse. Ere now it was merely unreasoning childhood.  
Still, all things to contrive as is wise I am wholly unable,  
Ever distraught by the presence of those who on this and on that side  
Urge me with evil intent ; nor is any at hand to assist me.  
Touching howbeit the fight of the stranger with Irus, it happened  
Not by the will of the suitors ; and also he proved him the stronger.  
Ay and by Father Zeus and Athena and Phoebus Apollo,  
Would that the suitors themselves e'en thus in the halls of my homestead  
Utterly crushed were wagging the head—some out in the courtyard,  
Others inside of the house—with the joints all loosed in their bodies,  
Even as Irus the beggar anigh to the gate of the courtyard  
Sitteth and waggeth his head, just like to a man that is drunken ;  
Neither erect on his feet is he able to stand, nor betake him  
Homeward (if home he possess) since every joint is unloosened."

Thus did the mother and son hold converse the one with the other.  
Then spake Eurymachus and addressed him to Penelopeia :  
" Daughter of Icarius, O wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Could now all the Achaeans in Iasan Argos behold thee,  
Far more suitors, I trow, would feast in the hall of thy palace  
E'en from the dawn of the morrow—for verily far thou excellest  
Every woman in beauty and stature and inward discernment."

Him straightway gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
" Eurymachus, if indeed I excelled in the beauty of person,  
All was destroyed by the gods when the Argives, sailing for Troyland,  
Mounted the vessels—with whom went also Odysseus my husband.  
O that he came once more and had care of my life as aforetime !  
Thus were fairer my fame, and my lot more happy ; for alway  
Now am I sad ; such woes hath a deity sent to assail me.  
Yea and I mind, on the day that he went and was leaving his homeland,  
Tenderly clasping my hand by the wrist these words he addressed me :  
‘ Listen, my wife ! for I trow of the well-greaved sons of Achaea  
Nowise all shall return unscathed from the land of the Trojans,  
Seeing they say that the Trojans themselves are famous as fighters,  
Whether at hurling the spear or at launching a bolt from the bowstring,  
Yea and as chariot-drivers of fleet-paced horses—and war-cars  
Ever decide most swiftly the turn of a dubious conflict.  
Therefore I know not if heaven will save me, or dooms me to perish  
There in the country of Troy. So, carefully see to the household.

Mindfully tend in the halls of the palace my father and mother  
Even as now—nay, still more mindfully while I am absent.  
Cometh the day that thy son as a bearded man thou beholdest,  
Then shalt thou marry whomever thou wilt, and relinquish thy homestead.  
Such was the word that he spake, and it all now findeth fulfilment.  
Come shall the night that will force me to face a detestable marriage,  
Ah unfortunate one, whose happiness heaven hath ruined!  
Also a grief right sore hath befallen my heart and my spirit:  
This was a habit, I trow, ne'er practised by suitors aforetime.  
Those that will sue for a woman of worth and a rich man's daughter,  
Wishing to woo her to wife and competing the one with another,  
Ever themselves bring cattle and fat-fed sheep for a banquet  
Unto the friends of the maiden, and offer her glorious love-gifts;  
Nor do they eat with impunity thus the possessions of others.”  
So did she speak, and it joyed long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
While she was coaxing a gift from the men and beguiling their spirits  
Thus with her winsome words, though things far other she longed for.

Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed her:  
“Daughter of Icarius, O wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Truly if any Achaean is willing to send for a present,  
Gifts thou shalt have—and indeed 'twere wrong to refuse to receive them.  
Yet—not a man of us all shall depart to his homestead or elsewhere  
Ere thou art wed to the man who is best of the noble Achaeans.”

Thus spake Antinous, and his words pleased all of the others.  
Forthwith each commanded a henchman to go for a present.  
Antinous had a robe both ample and beautiful brought him,  
Richly embroidered; with brooches, a dozen in all, it was fastened,  
Fashioned of gold, and with clasps well-bent were fitted the brooches.  
Eurynomus soon after they brought a magnificent necklace,  
Golden and beaded with amber that shone as the sun in his glory.  
Then prince Eurydamas two earrings received by his henchman  
Triple with pendants of mulberry colour and wonderful lustre.  
Back from the house of Pisander the chieftain, the son of Polycctor,  
Carried his servant a necklet—a jewel of exquisite beauty.  
Likewise all of the others received some beautiful present.  
Then to her upper apartment ascended the fairest of women,  
While at her side were borne by her maidens the glorious love-gifts.

Now did the suitors again to the pleasure of dancing and singing

Turn to delight them, intending to stay till the coming of even ;  
Nor was the rout at an end when the darkness of even descended.  
Then forthwith to the hall three braziers bringing they set them  
There as a light, and around them they laid dry faggots of fuel,  
Long since seasoned and ready to blaze, new split with the hatchet.  
Pine-brands too they inserted, and maidens alternately fed them,  
Thralls of the patient Odysseus himself ; and to these he addressed him,  
Even the Zeus-born prince, their master, the wily Odysseus :  
“ Maids, whose lord is Odysseus—although so long he is absent—  
Go to the chamber wherein your honoured lady abideth,  
There by her side ye can twist with the spindle the yarn, or delight her  
Sitting together within her apartment and carding the sheep-wool.  
Leave me alone—I will see to the lights for the whole of the party.  
E’en if they wish to remain till the coming of fair-throned Morning  
None shall be able to beat me, I trow. I am full of endurance.”

Thus did he speak ; but they laughed, as they looked each one at the other.  
Then right shamefully chid him the fair-cheeked maiden Melantho,  
Dolius’ daughter—but Penelopeia had nourished and reared her  
E’en as her child, and had given her toys to her soul’s satisfaction ;  
Yet was her heart untouched by the sorrows of Penelopeia,  
Yea and to Eurymachus she had given her love and her honour.  
This was the one that with words of abuse accosted Odysseus :  
“ Wretched, impertinent tramp, thou art surely bereft of thy senses.  
Get thee away from the palace, and go to a smithy and sleep there,  
Or to a tavern, instead of annoying us here with thy prating !  
Ay, in the presence of princes thou prat’st, with thy impudent spirit  
All unabashed. Is it wine that has got to thy wits ? or, it may be,  
Such is the bent of thy mind, to be always foolishly blabbing.  
Crazy methinks thou art gone through conquering Irus the vagrant.  
Have but a care—for I fear that a better than Irus arising  
Soon will be cuffing thy pate with his sinewy hands and will hunt thee  
Out of the bounds of the palace, with blood all richly bedabbled.”

Glaring askance at the maid deep-plotting Odysseus addressed her :  
“ Forthwith Telemachus shall be told what thou sayest, thou hussy !  
Straight I shall go to him—straight ; and at once he will cut thee in pieces.”  
Thus did he speak. At his words in alarm fled all of the women  
Hurrying out of the hall, their knee-joints loosened with terror,  
Quaking affrighted because they believed he had spoken in earnest.  
Then to the lights he attended, and nigh to the glow of the braziers

*Chapter* Stationed himself, and he gazed at the rout ; but the heart in his bosom  
*XVIII* Pondered on things far other, nor destined to fail of fulfilment.

Pondered on things far other, nor destined to fail of fulfilment.

Nowise wilt it Athena to suffer the arrogant suitors  
Still to refrain from insulting contempt, for she wished the resentment  
Deeper to sink in the heart of Odysseus the son of Laertes.  
Then made Eurymachus, prince Polybus' son, a beginning,  
Jeering in scorn at Odysseus and setting his fellows a-laughing :  
“ List to my words, O suitors of far-famed Penelopeia,  
While that I utter a thing that the heart in my bosom enjoins me !  
Sure it was heaven that guided this tramp to the house of Odysseus !  
Leastways so it appeareth to me, for a beacon of pine-brands  
There on his head is alight ! He hath never a hair—not the least one ! ”  
Spake, and withal to Odysseus, the sacker of cities, he turned him :  
“ Stranger, in case thou art willing to serve, come say, shall I take thee  
Up to an inland farm (I can offer thee wages sufficient),  
There to collect me the stones for the walls and to plant me the fruit-trees ?  
There, too, bread I am willing to give in unfailing abundance,  
Also to keep thee in dress and with shoes for thy feet to provide thee.  
Since however a right bad trade thou hast learnt, thou wilt never  
Willingly set thee to work, for the tramping and begging is doubtless  
More to thy mind, and to batten on doles thy insatiate belly.”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
 "Eurymachus, would only we twain had a trial of labour,  
 Late in the season of spring, when the days grow longer and longer,  
 Even a trial of grass, I holding a well-bent sickle,  
 Thou with a like, that we each might vie with the other at mowing,  
 Fasting till late in the gloom, with a crop right heavy before us.  
 Else let them give us a team to be driven—the strongest of oxen,  
 Tawny of colour and mighty in bulk, well sated with fodder,  
 Equal in age and in bearing the yoke, and of strength unexhausted—  
 Give us a field four-acred with soil that will yield to the ploughshare,  
 Then thou'dst see if the furrow I cut is a clean and a straight one.  
 Else let a war be awakened by Zeus whenever he willeth  
 Even to-morrow, and give me a shield and a couple of lances,  
 Give me a helmet of bronze, well-fitted to cover my temples,  
 Then thou'dst see me amidst of the foremost ranks of the fighters,  
 Neither again thou'dst talk with a scornful contempt of my belly.  
 Yea, in thy pride thou art utterly wanton—thy heart is unfeeling—  
 While in thy folly thou deemest thyself some mighty and great one,

Since it is only with men right weak thou consortest and cowards.  
O that Odysseus returned ! that he came once more to his homeland !  
Soon thou'dst find that the doors, though verily broad is the doorway,  
Prove too strait for thy flight, as thou hurriest out of the portal."

*Odyssey*  
A 111  
553-51

Thus did he speak ; but the man with a heart more maddened to fury  
Glared at Odysseus askance and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
" Ah, thou impertinent wretch, I'll punish thee soon for thy prating !  
Ay, in the presence of princes thou prat'st, with thy impudent spirit  
All unabashed. Is it wine that has got to thy wits? or, it may be,  
Such is the bent of thy mind to be always foolishly blabbing.  
Crazy methinks thou art gone through conquering Irus the vagrant."

Loudly he uttered the words, and he seized on a stool—but Odysseus  
Turning to Amphinomus sank down by the knees of the chieftain,  
Fearing the blow ; and he cast—and the footstool smote on the right hand  
One that was bearing the wine, and the bowl to the ground with a clatter  
Crash'd, and the youth with a groan on his back in the dust was extended.

Straight in the shadowy halls was a clamour aroused by the suitors,  
While each looked in the face of another anigh him exclaiming :  
" Would that this tramp of a stranger had elsewhere met his perdition  
Ere he had come to the palace to cause such tumult and uproar.  
Lo, we're quarrelling over a tramp ; all joy in the banquet  
Now will be utterly spoilt, for nought but unpleasantness reigneth."

Then spake Telemachus and with words right royal addressed them :  
" Sirs, ye appear to be mad. No more your conduct conceals it  
How ye partook of the food and the wine. Some demon excites you.  
Now, if enough he has feasted, let each go sleep at his homestead—  
Nay, he shall go when he wills ; I will drive no guest from my palace."

Thus did he speak, and the men all biting their lips in amazement  
Marvelled at Telemachus and the dauntless words he had uttered,  
Till prince Amphinomus made answer and thus he addressed them  
(Famed was the prince, and his father was son of Aretias, Nisus):  
" Listen, my friends : when the word that is spoken is spoken with justice,  
None should surely be wroth with the speaker and answer in anger.  
Neither maltreat, I beseech you, the stranger or other soever,  
None of the drudges that serve in the palace of godlike Odysseus.  
Come, let the bearer of wine now prime for libation the goblets,

*Odyssey* Then let us pour and return for the night each one to his homestead.  
*XIII* Touching the stranger, I vote in the halls of Odysseus to leave him.  
*117-118* Telemachus can befriend him, for his was the house that he came to."

Thus did he speak, and his word seemed pleasant to all of the others.  
So was a bowl made ready of wine ; lord Mulus mixed it,  
Herald of Dulichium, who on Amphinomus was attendant.  
Then to them all he dispensed it in turn, and they made a libation  
Unto the blessed immortals and drank of the wine honey-hearted.  
After libation and drinking as much as their spirits enjoined them  
Straight they departed to lay them to sleep each one in his homestead.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XIX

**N**OW when the godlike Odysseus was left in the hall of his homestead,  
Plotting with help of the goddess Athena the doom of the suitors,  
Quickly he turned to his son, & with swift-winged words he addressed him:  
"Telemachus—those weapons of war—we shall need to conceal them,  
Every one, and with words of persuasion addressing the suitors  
Try to cajole them, if missing the arms they shall ply thee with questions.  
Say: 'I've stowed them because of the smoke. They resemble no longer  
Those once left by Odysseus behind him when sailing for Troyland;  
Spoilt are all by the breath of the fire, where'er it has reached them.  
Also a reason was put in my mind by the Father Cronion,  
Even the fear lest heated with wine and beginning to quarrel  
One on another ye fall, and with blood bring shame on the feastings,  
Ay and the wooings; for iron itself attracteth to bloodshed.'"

These words uttered, the youth, as his well-loved father commanded,  
Called from her chamber and spake to the nurse, old Eurycleia:  
"Go, dear mother, and shut me the maids in the women's apartment,  
While I shall bear to the room of the treasure the arms of my father,  
Lying—the beautiful things—all tarnished by smoke and uncared for  
During the years that my father was absent and during my childhood.  
Now I will stow them away where vapour and smoke shall not reach them."  
Then did the dear old nurse make answer, and thus she addressed him:  
"Ay and if also, my child, thou'dst give such care and attention  
Unto the whole of the house, and the guarding of all of the treasures!  
Come now, who shall attend thee and carry a cresset to light thee?  
None of the maids thou permittest to come who attend to the lighting."  
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Lo, this stranger will light me. I ne'er shall allow to be idle  
One that has tasted my rations, although he is come from a distance."

Thus did he speak, and the word that he uttered abode with her wingless.  
Quickly she bolted the doors of the fair-built women's apartment.  
Then with his glorious son uprising the hero Odysseus  
Carried the bronze-bossed shields and the helms to the innermost chamber,  
Also the keen-edged spears; and before them the goddess Athene  
Went with a cresset of gold that around poured wonderful lustre.  
Suddenly then to his sire turned Telemachus, and addressed him:  
"Father, it sure is a marvellous thing that I plainly behold here—



*Odysseus* Leastways so it appears—for the walls and the beautiful alcoves,  
Ay and the rafters of pine and the pillars that rise to the roof-trees,  
All to my eyes seem flooded with light of a radiant splendour.  
Surely within is a god who inhabits the infinite heaven.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Hush! and conceal such things in thy heart, and refrain thee from questions!  
Thus it is ever the wont of the gods who inhabit Olympus.  
Go now, lay thee to sleep, and alone in the hall thou shalt leave me.  
Here will I try to incite to a quarrel the maids and thy mother;  
Then by her sorrows induced she will ask me the whole of my story.”

So did he speak, and his son went forth from the hall and betook him  
Unto his chamber, to sleep, by the light of the radiant torches,  
Where to repose was his wont whensoever sweet sleep overcame him.  
There did he lay him to rest and awaited the sacred morning,  
While in the hall of his palace remaining the godlike Odysseus  
Planned with the help of the goddess Athena the doom of the suitors.

Now came forth of her chamber the wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Like to the daughter of Leto or Queen Aphrodite the golden.  
Nigh to the hearth they had placed her the couch she was wont to recline on,  
Skilfully carved and with silver and ivory wrought by the artist  
Icmalius, and below for the feet he had fashioned a footstool  
Joined to the couch, on the which outspread was a beautiful sheepskin.  
Hither she came and reclined her, the wise-souled Penelopeia.  
Then did the white-armed maids from the women's apartment approaching  
Set them a-clearing the tables and all of the food and the goblets  
Out of the which they had drunk, those insolent men, as they feasted.  
Then from the braziers the ashes they cast on the ground, and they piled them  
Freshly with many a log, to illumine the hall and to warm it.

Now once more was Odysseus assailed by the maiden Melantho :  
“Stranger, it seems thou art fain e'en now to annoy us, at night-time  
Lolling about in the house and leering after the women.  
Get thee away from the palace, thou wretch! Let thy supper content thee!  
Else with a brand they'll beat thee and teach thee the way to the portal.”  
Glaring askance at the maid deep-plotting Odysseus addressed her :  
“Wherefore thus, good woman, with furious anger assail me?  
Merely because I am dirty and clothed in a sorry apparel?  
Merely because I am tramping the land? But necessity makes me.  
E'en as myself must needs be a man that is beggar and vagrant.

Once I was owner of house and of home and was held by my fellows  
 Rich in estate, and was wont full often to give to a vagrant,  
 Every beggar, whatever he seemed and whatever he wanted.  
 Many and many a thrall I possessed and abundance of all things  
 Such as allow of an easy existence and rich reputation.  
 Then I was ruined by Father Cronion—I ween that he willed it.  
 Wherefore, woman, beware lest thou too utterly losest  
 All the renown and the glory in which thou excell'st as a handmaid.  
 Well can it happen if only thy lady is driven to anger,  
 Or . . . if Odysseus return—and of hope still left is a remnant—  
 Else, if indeed he is dead and is ne'er to return to his homeland,  
 Such is already his son—yea such, by the grace of Apollo,  
 Telemachus is become, no handmaid here in his palace  
 Playing the wanton escapeth his eye—no more is he childish.”

Thus as he spake he was heard by the wise-souled Penelopeia.  
 Straight to the maiden she turned and addressed her and sharply rebuked her :  
 “Neither, thou shameless, impertinent thing, doth thy conduct escape me.  
 Gross is the sin thou committ'st : with thy head thou shalt purge the pollution.  
 Also thou knewest it well—for thou verily heardst me assert it—  
 How I was minded to come to the hall and to question the stranger  
 Touching the fate of my lord ; for my endless sorrow outwears me.”

Turning her then to her woman, the house-dame, thus she addressed her :  
 “Eurynomé, come, bring me a chair with a cover of sheepskin,  
 So that the stranger can sit and can tell me his story and also  
 Listen to all that I ask—for I wish him to answer my questions.”  
 Thus did she speak, and the woman, a chair well-polished selecting,  
 Speedily brought it and placed it, and covered it o'er with a sheepskin.  
 Here did he sit him adown, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
 Then she began to address him, the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
 “Firstly of all, O stranger, I wish thee to answer a question :  
 Whence and what mortal thou beest. Tell too of thy city and parents.”  
 Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
 “Lady, on earth there lives not the man would wish to offend thee  
 Saying thee nay, for thy fame is as high as the infinite heaven,  
 E'en as the fame of a monarch that feareth the gods and is blameless,  
 One that as ruler supreme of a great and a powerful nation  
 Ever defendeth the right ; and the dark earth beareth in season  
 Barley and wheat, and the trees are laden with fruitage, and alway  
 Yean unfailing the flocks, and the sea gives fish in abundance ;

*Odysseus* So by his wisdom he guideth his people and maketh them prosper.  
XIX Wherefore all thou shalt ask will I answer thee here in thy palace ;  
IIA-13 Yet, I beseech thee to question me not of my race and my homeland,  
Lest by thy words still more thou shalt fill with affliction my spirit  
Waking the past, where many a sorrow was mine ; and I must not  
Here in thy home—in the house of a stranger—with groaning and wailing  
Sit and lament ; and it profiteth nought to be endlessly mourning.  
Yea and I fear 'twould anger thy handmaid (even thyself too) ;  
Then she will say I am swimming in tears as a man that is drunken."

Him then in answer addressed these words wise Penelopeia :  
"Stranger, if e'er I was deemed to excel in the beauty of person,  
All was destroyed by the gods when the Argives, sailing for Troyland,  
Mounted the vessels—with whom went also my husband Odysseus.  
O that he came once more, and had care of my life as aforetime !  
So were fairer my fame, and my lot more happy ; for alway  
Now I am sad—such woes hath a deity sent to assail me.  
All of the foremost men who as chieftains rule in the islands,  
Samos and Dulichium and the woodland heights of Zacynthus,  
Yea and the princes around me in far-seen Ithaca dwelling,  
All come wooing, despite my refusal, and wasting my homestead.  
Wherefore little I care for my guests, or if beggars entreat me,  
Little for heralds I care, who work for the weal of the people ;  
Wasted away is my heart as I yearn for Odysseus, and alway  
While these suitors incite me to wed I am spinning devices.  
First was the shroud that I wove (and a deity prompted me surely).  
Rearing a spacious loom in my hall I betook me to weaving,  
Working a broad and a delicate web ; and anon I addressed them :  
'Princes who sue for my hand, since dead is the noble Odysseus,  
Patiently wait, though eager to hasten my marriage, till fully  
Woven this web—lest vainly I forfeit the fruits of my spinning.  
Lo, 'tis a shroud for the hero Laertes, to wrap him, whenever  
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him ;  
Else in Achaea's land might well some woman reproach me,  
Were he to lie, who possessed such riches, lacking a grave-cloth.'  
So did I speak, and within them the valiant heart was persuaded.  
Thus then all of the day at the spacious loom I was weaving ;  
During the night I unravelled the web, with my torches beside me.  
Three long years with my secret device I befooled the Achaeans,  
Till, when the fourth year came, and as season was followed by season,  
After the waning of months, and when many a day was accomplished,

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Then by the help of my maidens—the reckless and impudent creatures—  
Coming upon me by stealth they surprised me, and loudly reproached me.  
Thus was I forced, though sorely unwilling, to finish the labour.  
Now can I neither escape from a marriage, nor yet am I able  
Further device to discover; and urgently also my parents  
Bid me to marry; and vexed is my son as they waste his possessions;  
Yes, for he knows—is already a man, and is capable fully  
Care to bestow on his home: such glory the Father vouchsafes him.  
Nay but I beg thee to tell me the race to the which thou belongest.  
Not from a rock thou art sprung nor the ancient fabulous oak-tree.”

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
“Lady and consort revered of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Never, methinks, thou’lt weary of asking me after my kindred.  
Well, I will tell thee the truth—though verily pain it will cause me  
More than the pain that I feel, as is ever the way when a mortal  
Such long years as myself from the land of his birth is an exile,  
Visiting many a city of strangers and suffering hardships.  
Yet e’en so I will answer thy question and all thou hast asked me.  
There is a land called Crete in the midst of the wine-dark ocean,  
Fertile and fair, girt round by the water, with people upon it  
Many—a numberless host; and ninety the towns they inhabit.  
Mixed is the speech of the tongues of the diverse races—Achaeans,  
True-born Cretans, a race high-hearted, Cydonian people,  
Long-plumed Dorian folk and the heaven-descended Pelasgi.  
One of the towns, and the greatest, is Cnosus, the city that Minos  
Ruled nine years; and he shared in the counsels of Zeus the Almighty.  
Minos’ son, and my father, was Deucalion the heroic.  
Also by Deucalion prince Idomeneus was begotten.  
He was my brother; he sailed with the crook-beaked vessels to Troyland,  
Following Atreus’ sons. He was better at arms and was elder;  
I, who was younger, was called by the name right famous of Aethon.  
There I Odysseus beheld: as my guest I received him with presents.  
Unto the island of Crete he was borne by the might of the storm-wind  
While he was steering for Troy, swept southward afar from Malea.  
So in Amnisus he stayed, by the cavern of Eileithyia.  
Hard is the haven to win, and he barely escaped from the tempest.  
Then to the city of Cnosus he came and he asked for my brother,  
Saying that Idomeneus was a friend whom he loved and respected.  
Ay but already the tenth or eleventh morn had arisen  
Since in the crook-beaked ships he had sailed for the land of the Trojans.

So to the house I invited Odysseus and treated him kindly,  
Offering freely of all the abundant wealth of the homestead.  
Also I gave him and all of the men that had followed him thither  
Presents collected in public of glittering wine and of barley,  
Oxen moreover to slaughter for feasts to their souls' satisfaction.  
Ten days long in the port were prisoned the godlike Achaeans,  
Penned by the hurricane North, that permitted not even on dry land  
Any to stand on his feet ; for a hostile deity roused it.  
Then on the thirteenth morning it fell, and at once they departed."

Thus in the likeness of truth he related a tissue of falsehood.  
Meantime weeping she listened, her cheeks all flooded with teardrops,  
Like to the snow when it melteth away from the heights of the mountains,  
Thawed by the breath of the Eurus—the snow that the Zephyr hath sprinkled.  
E'en as it melteth and filleth with water the beds of the rivers,  
Thus was her beautiful face all flooded with tears as she listened,  
Mourning the death of her husband—who sat at her side ; and Odysseus,  
Touched to the heart by the grief of his wife, felt tender compassion ;  
Yet did his eyes keep fixed, as of horn they had been or of iron,  
Motionless under the lids. Tears came, but he skilfully hid them.  
Now when at last she had taken her fill of her tears and lamenting  
Once more found she the words for an answer, and thus she addressed him :  
" Friend—for a friend I will call thee—to test thee is now my intention,  
Whether in sooth he was there with his valiant comrades, and whether  
Truly my husband was welcomed as guest in thy halls, as thou sayest.  
Tell me exactly, I pray, of the raiment he wore on his body ;  
Tell me the manner of man that he seemed—and his followers also."

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Lady, to answer is hard, for I never again was anigh him  
These long years—and already methinks full twenty they number  
Since he departed and sailed from the shores of my native country.  
Yet e'en so can I tell how still in my heart he is imaged.  
Purple and thick was the cloak that was worn by the godlike Odysseus,  
Twofold, knit by a brooch that was fashioned of gold and was furnished  
Doubly with sockets for pins ; and the front was embossed with a picture :  
Here was a hound that was holding a dappled fawn with his forefeet,  
Watching it struggle ; and all that beheld were greatly astonished  
How, though golden, the hound kept watching the fawn as he choked it,  
While in the longing to win an escape with the legs it was writhing.  
Further, I noticed the tunic he wore : 'twas of linen that glisten'd

Like to the delicate skin that is peeled from a shrivelling onion ;  
Such was the softness thereof ; and it gleamed as the sun in his glory.  
Verily many a woman that saw it was filled with amazement.  
Also a thing I will say, which carefully mark and consider :  
Whether at home such garment was worn by Odysseus I know not ;  
Haply he got it as gift from a friend when he mounted the vessel,  
Or from a stranger perhaps—for of many a man did Odysseus  
Win the affection, and few were like him among the Achaeans.  
I too gave him a present—a dagger of bronze and a tunic  
Beautiful, purple of colour and fringed with a border of tassels.  
Also with honour I brought him aboard of his well-decked vessel.  
Then, I remember, a herald—his elder in years by a little—  
Alway attended him ; ay, I can also describe his appearance :  
Round in the shoulders and dark in his skin, and with hair that was curly.  
Eurybatés was his name, and of all of his comrades Odysseus  
Honoured him most, for the man had a mind that was like to the master's."

Thus as he spake to a longing for tears still more he aroused her,  
Since in her heart she confessed that the token was sure that he gave her.  
Now when at last she had sated her soul with her tearful lamenting,  
Once more finding the words for an answer she spake and addressed him :  
"Stranger, before it was only thy misery moved my compassion ;  
Now as a friend I shall welcome and honour thee here in my homestead.  
Yes—these garments, I gave them myself—just such as thou sayest—  
Folded I carried them forth from my room, and the glittering brooch too  
Added to serve as adornment. But, ah, no more shall I see him !  
Ne'er shall I welcome him home to the well-loved land of his fathers ;  
Nay, for I know to his doom in the hollow ship he departed  
Sailing for Ilion, city of doom, name ne'er to be uttered."

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

"Lady and consort revered of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Waste no longer with weeping thy beautiful body, nor sorrow,  
Wearing thy spirit away, for thy lord !—Though scarce can I blame thee ;  
Every woman is fain to lament when she loseth her husband,  
One who loved her in youth and has made her the mother of children,  
Though not a man as Odysseus, the equal, they say, of immortals.  
Stay howbeit thy tears and consider my words, I beseech thee.  
This I can tell thee for certain, nor longer I wish to conceal it,  
Touching thy husband's return . . . that I heard of Odysseus but lately,  
Not in a far-off land but the rich Thesprotian country,



Ay and alive ; and he brings full many a beautiful treasure,  
Gifts that he got by request from the people. His trusty companions  
All he has lost, and his hollow ship, on the wine-dark ocean,  
While he was leaving the isle Thrinacia—since they had angered  
Zeus and the sun-god Eëlios ; for they slaughtered his oxen.  
All of them perished, entombed in the fathomless surges of ocean—  
All but himself ; he was borne on the keel of his ship to the dry land,  
Land of a nation akin to the gods, Phaeacian people.  
These right heartily welcomed and honoured him like an immortal,  
Giving him many a gift ; and they wished of themselves to convoy him  
Safely again to his home, and Odysseus had verily been here  
Long since, only it seemed to his mind more prudent and better  
Wealth to collect as he journeyed around through many a country,  
Since more wily and gainful devices than others of mortals  
Knoweth Odysseus ; on earth there lives not his equal in cunning.  
Now it was this that I heard from the King of Thesprotia, Pheidon :  
Of it he assured me on oath, as he poured in his hall a libation,  
Dragged to the sea was the ship, and the crew of the rowers was ready,  
Waiting to carry him home to the well-loved land of his fathers.  
Me ere this he despatched—for it chanced that a vessel was sailing,  
Manned with Thesprotian folk, to the island of bountiful harvests  
Dulichium ; and he showed me the wealth that Odysseus had gathered,  
Treasures sufficient to feed one's heirs to the tenth generation ;  
Such was the wealth that Odysseus had stored in the halls of the monarch.  
Now he was gone, I was told, to Dodona, to list to the counsel  
Zeus from the thick-leaved height of his oak might utter to guide him  
So as to win once more to the well-loved land of his fathers  
Whence so long he is missed, whether open his coming or secret.  
Thus, as I say, he is safe ; ere long thou'lt learn his arrival ;  
Yea he is even at hand, nor afar from his friends and his homeland  
Long will he tarry—And yet, I will give thee an oath to confirm it.  
First then witness it Zeus, of immortals the highest and strongest,  
Yea and the hearth to the which I am come of the noble Odysseus,  
Verily all these things that I tell thee will find a fulfilment.  
Whilst this year on its path still circles return shall Odysseus,  
Even as this moon dies and the new-born moon is appearing.”

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“Stranger, I pray for the word thou hast spoken to find a fulfilment ;  
Then shalt thou speedily find both friendship and many a present  
Come from me—such that whoever shall meet thee will hold thee as blessed.



Ah but in this wise bodeth my spirit, and thus it will happen :  
Ne'er shall Odysseus return to his home, and ne'er shalt thou gain thee  
Escort hence—for the house now lacketh a lord and a master  
Such as Odysseus when living amidst us—if e'er he was living—  
Ready to welcome and honour a guest and to speed him at parting.  
Hearken, my maids—ye shall wash this stranger and place him a bedstead.  
Strew it with bedding—a mattress and wrappers and glistening blankets,  
So that he lie right warm till the fair-throned morn shall awake him.  
Mind at the dawning of day to prepare him a bath and anoint him ;  
Then at the table with Telemachus let his seat be provided  
Here in the hall—'Twill be worse for the fellow, whoe'er of the suitors  
Harms him or wantonly vexes his soul. No longer shall such one  
Here find profit, although full sorely his spirit be angered.  
Nay, O stranger . . . for how wilt thou ever discern me a woman  
Better than others in good understanding and thoughtful devices,  
Should I allow thee unwashed and unkempt and in sorry apparel  
Here to be seated as guest in my hall? Short-lived is a mortal.  
Every one who is hard in his nature and hard in his actions,  
All men call down curses upon him and long for his ruin  
While he is living ; as soon as he dieth they merrily mock him.  
Every one who is blameless in nature and blameless in action,  
Widely is spread his repute by the guests he hath kindly entreated  
E'en to the ends of the earth, and by many is lauded his goodness."

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
"Lady and consort revered of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Verily unto my soul have wrappers and glistening blankets  
Hateful appeared from the day when the snow-clad mountains of Creta  
Faded from sight as I voyaged from thence on the long-oared vessel.  
Nay, I will lie as so often I lay all sleepless till daybreak,  
Since full many a night on a bed unspeakably wretched  
Have I reclined and awaited the fair-throned beautiful morning.  
Also the bathing of feet delighteth my heart as aforetime  
Now no longer, and never my foot shall be touched by a woman,  
Any of all of the maidens who work in thy palace as servants,  
Save peradventure a dame right agéd, devoted and loyal,  
One that has learnt in her heart to endure much sorrow, as I have.  
Should such woman be present I would not forbid her to bathe me."

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
"Stranger beloved—for ne'er was a man more full of discretion,

None more worthy of love that has come as a guest to my homestead—  
Such is the wisdom and prudence thou showest in all thou hast spoken.  
Truly an ancient attendant I own, full sage and discerning,  
One who was nurse to my lord—ill-fated Odysseus ; she reared him,  
Yea in her arms she received him as soon as his mother had borne him ;  
She will provide thee a bath for the feet, though aged and feeble.  
Come now, rise at my bidding, thou wise-souled Eurycleia !  
Bathe this man. He is like to thy master in age ; and Odysseus  
Now is perhaps just such in his hands and his feet as this stranger,  
Since that a man grows old full soon if he meeteth misfortune.”

Thus did she speak, and her aged attendant, bitterly weeping,  
Covered her face with her hands, while words right doleful she uttered :  
“ Woe to me ! Woe for my child ! All helpless I mourn thee—of all men  
Hated by heaven the most, though pious and heaven revering.  
Never did any of mortals to Zeus that delighteth in thunder  
Offerings make of the fat thigh-flesh, and of chosen oblations,  
Such as thyself wert wont while praying the Father to bring thee  
Unto a smooth old age and thy glorious son to his manhood ;  
Yet hath he taken from thee—thee only—the day of returning.  
Yea and perchance e’en thus in an alien people the women  
Mocked him whenever he came to the far-famed house of a chieftain,  
Even as here thou art mocked by the women—the impudent creatures.  
Ay and to shun their taunts and their ceaseless insults thou wiltst not  
These should bathe thee ; but, lo, I am ready to do as my mistress  
Bids me, the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelopeia.  
Gladly thy feet will I wash—not only for Penelopeia,  
Nay, but for thine own sake ; for the heart in my bosom with pity  
Deeply is moved. Moreover, attentively mark what I tell thee :  
Many a wayworn stranger arrives at the palace, but never  
Mortal I saw so like to another as here is the likeness—  
So in thy form and thy voice and thy feet thou art like to Odysseus.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ True, old lady—and thus says every one that beheld us,  
Me and Odysseus : exceedingly like is the one to the other ;  
So ’tis affirmed—as thyself moreover hast noted and told me.”

Thus did he speak, and the old nurse, taking a glittering basin  
Used for the washing of feet, poured into it plentiful water,  
Firstly the cold—then added a beaker of warm ; and Odysseus  
Sat by the hearth ; but his face he had suddenly turned to the darkness,  
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Struck by the fear lest while that she handled his body the woman,  
Seeing the scar, might know him, and all might then be discovered.  
So she approached, and she set her to wash him—her lord; and she straightway  
Knew him, perceiving the wound that a boar's white tusk had inflicted  
Once when he went to Parnassus to visit the sire of his mother,  
Autolycus and his sons—brave prince, who in craft was unrivalled,  
Skilled in the taking of oaths, and deceits that a deity taught him,  
Even Hermeias himself; for he burnt well-pleasing oblations,  
Thighs of the lambs and the kids, and the god vouchsafed him his favour.  
Now it had chanced, when he came to the fertile Ithacan country,  
Autolycus found there with a new-born infant his daughter.  
Him laid Eurycleia the nurse on the knees of his grandsire  
E'en as he ended his supper, and turned to the prince and addressed him :  
“Autolycus, now think of the name that thou wilt to be given  
Unto the son of thy daughter—the darling that long she has prayed for.”  
Then prince Autolycus upraising his voice made answer :  
“Daughter, and lord of my daughter, a name I will tell you to give him.  
Hither, behold, I am come much angered at many a mortal,  
Many a man and a woman on earth which nourisheth all things;  
Wherefore name him Odysseus, ‘The Angered’; moreover I promise,  
Should he arrive at his manhood, and come to the home of his mother,  
Even the palace that lies on Parnassus amid my possessions,  
Out of my wealth I will make him a gift and dismiss him rejoicing.”  
So to receive from the prince these glorious presents Odysseus  
Came to Parnassus, and Autolycus and the sons of the chieftain  
Offered him greeting with grasp of the hand and with words of affection;  
Amphithee moreover, his mother's mother, embraced him,  
Giving him kisses on both of his beautiful eyes and his forehead.  
Autolycus now ordered his sons, the illustrious princes,  
Quickly a meal to prepare; and they hastily did as he bade them.  
Bringing a five-year male from the herd of the cattle, they killed it,  
Flayed it and deftly prepared it—divided the whole of the carcass,  
Skilfully chopped it in pieces and spitted the pieces on skewers.  
Then, when with care it was roasted and ready, they portioned the messes.  
Thus then all of the day, till the sun sank down in the ocean,  
Feasting they sat, and their souls lacked nought in the plentiful banquet,  
Till, when the sun went down and come was the gloom of the twilight,  
Weary they laid them to rest and accepted the blessing of slumber.  
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,  
Forthwith gat them away to the chase both dogs and their masters,  
Sons of the prince, old Autolycus; and the godlike Odysseus

*Odysseus* Went with them. Soon they arrived at the woodclad slopes of the mountain,  
Even Parnassus, and entered at once in the wind-swept gorges,  
Just as the sun with his light new-risen was smiting the cornfields,  
Mounting on high from the placid and fathomless depths of the ocean.  
Then at a glade of the woodland the beaters arrived, and before them  
Onward the dogs spread, scenting a trail, and the sons of the chieftain  
Followed behind, and amidst of them all went godlike Odysseus  
Close to the dogs, and his quivering spear in his hand he was swaying.  
Here was a monstrous boar, that had made him a lair in the thicket,  
Whither the might of the wind ne'er breathed through laden with moisture,  
Neither did ever the sun with the shafts of his radiance pierce it,  
Nor did the rain drip through it at all, so deep in the covert  
Hid was the lair of the boar; and of leaves was a plentiful downfall.  
Soon did the sound of the feet of the dogs and the beaters arouse him  
Nearer approaching. He rushed from the depths of the thicket to meet them.  
Every bristle erect, and his eyes all flaming, he stood there  
Facing them. Then to advance was the first and the foremost Odysseus.  
Lifting his long sharp spear in his powerful hand, he attacked him,  
Eagerly trying to stab; but the boar, too quick for him, lashed out  
Sideways, striking him over the knee with the tusk; and it ripped through  
Much of the flesh; but as far as the bone of the man it attained not.  
Then by Odysseus was smitten the boar: on the right, by the shoulder,  
Struck him and passed clean through him the point of the glittering spear-blade.  
Over he rolled in the dust with a scream, and fled was his spirit.  
Autolycus' dear sons then busied them over the carcass;  
Also they tended the wound of the valiant godlike Odysseus—  
Bound it with skill, and the dark red blood with a song of enchantment  
Staunch'd; and at once they returned to the home of their well-loved father.  
Here did the prince old Autolycus and the sons of the chieftain  
Carefully see to his healing, and offered him glorious presents;  
Soon too, lovingly speeding his willing departure, they sent him  
Back to the Ithacan isle; and his mother, the queen, and his father  
Joyed to behold him returned to his home, and they asked him of all things—  
Questioned him how he had come by the wound; and he duly related  
How by the glittering tusk of a boar he was struck on Parnassus,  
When with the sons of the chief, prince Autolycus, he was hunting.

Now as the flat of her hand passed o'er it, the agéd attendant  
Knew it at once by the touch. Down dropt she the foot she was holding.  
On to the edge of the basin the leg struck sharply. The vessel  
Clattered and rang as it fell on its side, upsetting the water.



THE RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY EURYCLEIA



Joy overwhelmed her together with grief, while gathering teardrops  
Flooded her eyes, and the flow of her clear-voiced utterance failed her.  
Then, to the chin of Odysseus uplifting her hand, she addressed him :  
“Yea, thou art truly Odysseus—my child ! my beloved ! my master !  
Nor did I know thee until I had handled the whole of thy body !”

*Odysseus*

*XX*

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E'en as she spake she was eagerly glancing at Penelopeia,  
Wishing to tell her that here in his home was her own dear husband.  
Yet was her mistress unable to answer her look or to note it,  
Since that the goddess Athena diverted her mind ; and Odysseus  
Groped with his right for the throat of the woman and clutched it and held it,  
While with the other he drew her anigh him and spake to her saying :  
“Nurse, dost thou wish to destroy me—the child thou didst tenderly nourish  
Here on thy breast—when at last, all perils and sufferings ended,  
Now in the twentieth year I am come to the land of my fathers ?  
Since thou art ware of the truth (for a god to thy heart hath revealed it)  
Keep thou silence—that none in the palace suspect it beside thee.  
This moreover I say—’twill certainly find a fulfilment—  
Should God grant me to vanquish the arrogant suitors, not even  
Thee will I spare, fond nurse of my childhood, whenever the others  
Here in my halls I shall slay—those faithless ones of the handmaids.”

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Eurycleia :  
“Nay but my child, what word by the door of thy lips hath escaped thee !  
Surely thou knowest how strong is my will and unbending my spirit.  
Firm I will keep me—as firm and as rigid as stone or as iron.  
Also a thing will I say, which carefully mark and remember :  
Should God grant it indeed that thou vanquish the arrogant suitors,  
Then I will tell thee of all concerning the maids in the palace,  
Which of them honour thee not and which are guiltless among them.”  
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Nurse, why talkest thou of these ? It is nowise needful to tell me.  
Well shall I mark them and learn to distinguish the one from the other.  
Keep such words to thyself ! Leave all to the gods, and be silent !”

Thus did he speak ; and the nurse passed forth from the hall to procure her  
Water again for his feet ; for the whole he had spilt of the other.  
So, when at last he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,  
Nearer again to the hearth drew up with his settle Odysseus,  
Wishing to warm him, and covered the scar with his ragged apparel.



Then wise Penelopeia began once more to address him :

“Stranger, for mine own sake still one slight question I ask thee.  
Soon will be coming for all the delectable season of slumber,  
Coming for all whom sweet sleep visits in spite of their sorrows,  
While for myself . . . it was sorrow unending a deity sent me.  
All day long I am soothing my spirit with weeping and wailing,  
While I attend to my work and the tasks of my maids in the palace.  
Then, when the darkness is come and all are buried in slumber,  
Sleepless I lie on my couch with a close-throated heart, and around it  
Stinging anxieties swarm and distress me amidst of my mourning.  
E’en as the daughter of Pandareüs, pale-plumaged Aëdon,  
Singeth her exquisite song when the season of spring is advancing,  
Out of her hidden retreat in the midst of the clustering branches  
Pouring with many a varying note her melodious music,  
While she bewaileth the darling she slew in her ignorant madness,  
Itylus—even her child, whose father was Zethus the monarch ;  
Thus too wavers my spirit and swaying to this and to that side  
Biddeth me now to remain with my son, protecting securely  
All my possessions and slaves and the high-roofed halls of my homestead,  
Paying respect to the bed of my lord and the voice of the people ;  
Then it will bid me to follow the man who of all the Achæans  
Proveeth the best of the suitors and offereth numberless presents.  
Touching my son—so long as he still was a child and was thoughtless  
Never he wished me to wed and abandon the home of my husband ;  
Now he is grown ; and as soon as he reached full measure of manhood  
Straight he began to beseech me to go—to depart from the palace—  
Angered in heart at the waste of his wealth by the princes Achæan.  
Now will I beg thee to list to a dream that I dreamt, and to rede it.  
Geese, some twenty in number, I keep at the house, and they feed on  
Wheat that I put in the water ; and watching them giveth me pleasure.  
Once, from the mountain descending, an eagle, enormous and hook-beaked,  
Killed them by seizing and breaking the necks of them all ; and they lay there  
Strewn in a heap in the court, while soaring to heaven he vanished.  
Then, as I wept and lamented aloud (although I was dreaming),  
Hurriedly gathered around me the fair-tressed maids of Achæa,  
Hearing me bitterly wail for my geese all killed by the eagle.  
Swiftly howbeit returning he sat on the end of a roof-beam,  
Whence with the voice of a man he addressed me and stayed me from weeping :  
‘ Daughter of far-famed Icarius, take courage ! I bring thee  
No mere dream but a vision of truth that will find a fulfilment.  
Lo these geese—they betoken the suitors ; and I, that as eagle

Firstly appeared in thy dream, am returned to thee now as thy husband,  
Yea and will bring down fearful destruction on all of the suitors.’  
Thus as he spake, from its spell sweet slumber released me, and straightway  
Peering around I perceived that my geese were still in the courtyard  
Greedy eating the corn at the side of the trough, as aforetime.”

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Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ None, O lady, I ween, were able the dream to interpret  
Elsewise wresting its meaning, for truly Odysseus in person  
Telleth thee how he shall bring it to pass. Doom threatens the suitors,  
All of them. None shall escape from his lot and the death that awaits him.”

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“ Stranger, a dream is a thing right difficult, hard to interpret ;  
Neither is all that we dream oft certain to find a fulfilment.  
Twain are fabled the gates of the shadowy visions of Dreamland,  
One of them fashioned of horn, and of ivory fashioned the other.  
Every vision that passeth the white sawn ivory portal  
Lightly deceives, and the message it bringeth is never accomplished ;  
All which pass to the earth by the gate smooth-polished of ox-horn  
Smoothly accomplish the truth, so oft as a mortal beholds them.  
Never howbeit from thence (do I fear) did my wonderful vision  
Come to me ; else to myself and my son 'twere joyfully welcome.  
Also a thing will I say, which carefully mark and remember :  
Soon will be here the detestable dawn that will cut me for ever  
Hence, from the home of Odysseus. I purpose to summon a contest,  
Using the axes that here in the hall he has often erected,  
Set in a row as the ribs of a vessel, a dozen in number.  
Placing him then at a distance he shot through all with his arrow.  
Now am I minded to offer this trial of skill to the suitors.  
Who with his hands most easily stringeth the bow of Odysseus,  
Should he be able to shoot clean through all twelve of the axes,  
Him I shall follow as wife, and shall bid farewell to this mansion,  
Beautiful, beautiful home of my girlhood, abounding in comfort—  
Home that I often in future, methinks, in my dreams shall remember.”

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Lady and consort revered of Odysseus the son of Laertes,  
Make no further delay with this trial of skill in thy homestead,  
Seeing that verily soon will return deep-plotting Odysseus  
Ere by the men, as in vain with the bow smooth-polished they fumble,

*Odyssey* Stretched is the string on the notch and the iron is pierced by an arrow."

*XIX*

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
"Shouldst thou be willing to sit at my side in the hall and delight me,  
Never the whole of the night would slumber descend on my eyelids.  
Sleep howbeit we must ; for to live and to lack it is able  
None of mankind ; such fate is allotted by heaven to mortals,  
Every wight that is dwelling on earth, rich giver of harvests.  
So I shall mount to my upper apartment, and there, when I enter,  
Lay me again on the bed that is ever the place of my groanings,  
Watered so oft by my tears from the day that Odysseus departed  
Sailing to Ilion, city of doom, name ne'er to be uttered.  
There I shall lay me to rest. Do thou lay thee to sleep in the palace.  
Strew thee a bed on the ground ; or the maidens shall place thee a bedstead."

These words spoken she went to her glistering upper apartment ;  
Neither alone did she go : she was followed by all of her maidens.  
So, to her upper apartment ascending with maiden attendants,  
Here she lamented Odysseus, her well-loved husband, till gently  
Slumber was poured on her lids by the grey-eyed goddess Athene.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XX

**S**O in the porch of the hall did the godlike Odysseus repose him.  
First on the floor he extended an untanned hide, and above it  
Spread him a number of fleeces of sheep that the princes had slaughtered.  
Eurynomé then covered him o'er with a wrap as he lay there.  
Long did Odysseus, with heart that was brooding on ills for the suitors,  
Lie there sleepless. And out of the inner apartment the women,  
Those that had ever till now consorted in love with the suitors,  
Came forth, bandying laughter and merriment one with another.  
Then, as he heard them, aroused was the soul in the depths of his bosom.  
Many a time did he waver with doubt in his mind and his spirit  
Whether to haste in pursuit and to deal out death to the maidens,  
Every one, or to leave them alone with the arrogant suitors  
One time more and the last ; and his heart growled fiercely within him ;  
E'en as a dog, when in front of her helpless puppies she paces,  
Growls in her rage at a man that she knows not and longs to assail him,  
So it was growling within him in wrath at their infamous actions.  
Then on his bosom he smote and his heart he addressed and rebuked it :  
" Courage, my heart, and endure ! Still worse was the shame thou enduredst,  
E'en on the day when the huge irresistible monster, the Cyclops,  
Ate my heroic companions, but thou wast undaunted, till cunning  
Freed thee from out of the cave where certain appeared thy destruction."

Thus did he speak to the heart in his bosom, exhorting it sharply ;  
Yea and it heard and obeyed him, and held with a patient endurance  
Firm. But Odysseus himself kept turning to this and to that side.  
Just as a man in the front of a fire that is mightily blazing  
Holdeth a pudding of blood and of fat, and to this and to that side  
Constantly turns it, and longs for the thing to be speedily roasted,  
So was he tossing to this and to that side, musing in spirit  
How 'twere best to attempt the attack on the impudent suitors  
Single against so many.

And now drew near him Athene,  
Come from the heights of Olympus and changed to a woman in semblance.  
Standing beside him, anigh to his head, these words she addressed him :  
" Wherefore still art thou lying awake, most hapless of mortals ?  
Lo now, here is thy home ; here too is thy wife in thy homestead,  
Ay and thy son—such son as by every father is longed for."

*Odyssey* Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Verily all thou hast said, O goddess, is true and befitting ;  
Still I am much in suspense and am musing in mind and in spirit  
How 'twere best to attempt the attack on the impudent suitors,  
Being but one, while here in the house they're ever in numbers.  
Also a doubt still greater is making me muse in my spirit :  
Were I to slay them by help of thyself and of Zeus the Almighty,  
Whither to flee and escape the avenger ? Resolve it, I pray thee ! "

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
" Slow to believe ! Why, many a man oft trusts in a comrade  
Weaker by far—in a mortal with no such counsels as mine be.  
I am the goddess who vowed to protect thee till all was accomplished,  
Yea and in every danger ; and once more plainly I tell thee,  
Even if companies fifty in number of men that be mortal  
Compassed us closely about, right eager in battle to slay us,  
All of their fat-fed flocks thou'dst capture and all of their cattle.  
Come, compose thee to slumber ! A weary vexation is watching  
All night sleepless ; and now thou art rising from out of thy troubles."   
These words uttered Athena, and poured forth sleep on his eyelids ;  
Then she departed, the beautiful goddess, and came to Olympus.

Meanwhile slumber had seized him and loosened the cares of his spirit,  
Slumber that loosens the limbs. But his true-souled wife had awakened.  
Long on her soft-strown bed she had sat and had wept and lamented,  
Till, when at length she was weary in spirit of weeping and wailing,  
Then did the fairest of women to Artemis turn in entreaty :  
" Artemis, lady divine, O daughter of Zeus the Almighty,  
Send, I beseech thee, an arrow that piercing my bosom shall slay me  
Now in a moment—or would that the hurricane blast of the storm-winds  
Seized me, and sweeping me off on the shadowy paths of the tempests  
Hurled me below, where back to the sea comes streaming the Ocean,  
E'en as the daughters of Pandareüs were seized by the storm-blast.  
Father and mother they lost by the act of the gods, and as orphans  
Sole they remained in the halls of the palace ; but Queen Aphrodite  
Fed them on curds and on honey and wine that was sweet as the honey.  
Then were given the maidens above all women by Hera  
Beauty and wisdom, and chaste Queen Artemis granted them stature,  
While from Athena they learnt the designing of exquisite handwork.  
Now when the fair Aphrodite was wending to lofty Olympus,  
There to obtain for the maidens the blissful assurance of wedlock,



THE PRAYER OF PENELOPEIA





Seeking the promise of Zeus who delighteth in thunder (he knoweth  
All that to earthborn mortals is granted by Fate or denied them),  
Meantime down came sweeping the Harpies, the Spirits of Tempest,  
Snatched them, and unto the hateful Erinyes gave them as handmaids.  
Thus too sweep me away, O gods who inhabit Olympus!  
Else, O fair-tressed Artemis, smite me!—and thus, with Odysseus  
Imaged in mind, I shall go to the terrible nethermost darkness,  
Nor shall I ever rejoice the affections of one that is baser.  
Now herein is an evil endurable—namely, whenever  
One that by day sits weeping, with heart sore stricken by sorrow,  
Yieldeth at night to the power of sleep: all things he forgetteth,  
Evil as well as the good, when it once o'ershadows his eyelids,  
While for myself—some deity sends false dreams to afflict me;  
Yea and to-night one like to my husband was sleeping beside me,  
Such as he seemed when he sailed with the host; and the heart in my bosom  
Joy'd, for I thought that at last it was true—no dream, but a vision.”

Thus did she speak, and anon came Morning, the golden-enthronéd.  
Now as she wept had her voice been heard by the godlike Odysseus.  
Forthwith fell he a-musing thereat, and she seemed to his fancy  
Surely to know him already and close to his head to be standing.  
Rolling together the wraps and the fleeces wherein he had slumbered  
These on a settle he laid in the hall, then carried the oxhide  
Out to the court, and to Zeus uplifted his hands in entreaty:  
“Father, if truly thy grace and the favour of heaven hath led me  
Over the wet and the dry to my home (though sorely ye plagued me),  
Grant me, I pray, that an omen be uttered by one that is waking  
Here in the house; and without, O Zeus, send also a portent!”

Such was the prayer that he uttered, and Zeus, great Counsellor, heard him.  
Forthwith out of the radiant heights of Olympus he thundered  
Down from aloft, from the sky; and godlike Odysseus exulted.  
Also was uttered a voice by a woman that ground in an outhouse  
Nigh to him. Here were standing the mills of the prince of the people.  
These were worked by the women, a dozen in number, that toiled there  
Making the meal of the wheat and the barley, the marrow of mortals.  
All of the rest were sleeping, for ground was the whole of their wheat-grain.  
She was the weakest, and now was alone and incessantly toiling.  
Stopping her mill she exclaimed (to her master it came as an omen):  
“Father of all! Great Zeus, who art monarch of men and immortals,  
Loudly in sooth thou hast thundered from starry expanses of heaven,

*Odyssey* Nor is a cloud to be seen ! It is surely a portent for some one !  
XX Also for me, poor wretch, accomplish the prayer that I utter :  
111-113 O for the last and the latest of all their delightful carousings  
Here in the halls of Odysseus to-day to be held by the suitors !  
Yea, for the men have loosened my knees with this pitiless labour,  
Grinding the grain—so now let them finish their feastings for ever ! ”  
Then did Odysseus rejoice, for he felt that the voice was an omen,  
E'en as the thunder of Zeus, and that vengeance had come for the guilty.

Now had the rest of the maids in the beautiful home of Odysseus  
Gathered, and soon on the hearth the unwearied flame they rekindled.  
Telemachus too rose from his bed, as a god in his beauty,  
Donned his apparel, suspended his keen-edged sword from the shoulder,  
Under his smooth-skinned feet then fastened his beautiful sandals,  
Lifted his powerful spear, with its blade sharp-pointed and bronzen,  
Went to the threshold and, there as he stood, called Eurycleia :  
“ Say, dear nurse, did ye honour the guest in the house ? did ye give him  
Food and a bed ? or, left to himself, is he lying uncared for ?  
Such is the way with my mother : although of a good understanding,  
Blindly she seemeth to value the one or the other of mortals ;  
Often she honours the worse and dismisses the better unhonoured.”  
Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Eurycleia :  
“ Nay but, my child, no blame hath thy mother ; thou needst not reproach her.  
Wine he was given, and sat there drinking as long as he listed ;  
Food he refused : no longer he hungered, he said ; for she asked him.  
Then, as the time was at hand to be mindful of rest and of slumber,  
Some of her maiden attendants she ordered to place him a bedstead.  
Natheless, like to a man that is utterly broken and wretched,  
Neither to sleep on a bed was he willing nor wrap him in blankets.  
Spreading the untanned hide of an ox and a couple of sheepskins,  
Out in the passage he slept ; and we covered him o'er with a mantle.”

Thus did she speak, and the youth fared forth by the hall of the palace  
Bearing his spear ; and by two of his fleet-paced hounds he was followed.  
Then to the council he went of the well-greaved sons of Achaea,  
While to her maidens she issued her orders, that good old woman,  
Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops, who was son of Pisenor :  
“ Come now, set ye to work ! Some busily see to the sweeping.  
Sprinkle with water the floor of the hall, and the covers of purple  
Place on the fair-wrought chairs. Some wipe down all of the tables,  
Rubbing them clean with a sponge ; then rinse out every wine-bowl,

Also the twy-cupped beakers of delicate work ; and let others  
Go to the fountain for water, and quickly return with it hither.  
Not much longer, methinks, from the hall will the suitors be absent ;  
Early the morn they will come ; 'tis for all of the people a feast-day."  
Thus did she speak, and they listened with care to her words and obeyed her :  
Twenty departed at once to the fountain of dark spring water,  
While that the others remained in the palace and skilfully toiled there.

Then there entered the thralls of the noble Achaeans, and straightway  
Skilfully cleft them of wood right many a log ; and the women  
Came from the fountain ; and also the swineherd arrived, and he joined them.  
Down from the farm three hogs he had driven, the fattest and finest.  
These he permitted to feed in the beautiful palace enclosure,  
While to Odysseus he came and with words right gentle addressed him :  
" Stranger, with greater regard seem now the Achaeans to treat thee ?  
Or, as they acted before in the hall, with dishonour and insult ?"  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" O for the gods to avenge, Eumaeus, the scorn and the outrage  
Shown by the wanton infatuate deeds of the insolent fellows  
Here in the home of another ! Nor shame do they feel—not the smallest."

Thus did the twain stand there conversing the one with the other.  
Then came passing anigh them Melanthius master of goatherds,  
Driving his goats, prime beasts that from all of the flocks he had chosen,  
Meant for the suitors to eat ; and by herdsmen twain he was followed.  
Now when the goats he had tethered beneath the reëchoing portal,  
Up to Odysseus he came and with words of abuse he addressed him :  
" Stranger, it seems thou art fain e'en here in the house to annoy us,  
Begging from all of the men !—Go, get thee away from the palace !  
Ne'er shall we twain find means to be rid of the matter and part us  
Ere each tastes of the fists of the other. I call it indecent,  
Begging and begging ! Besides, there's feasting with other Achaeans."  
Thus did he speak ; and Odysseus replied not a word, but he stood there  
Silently shaking his head, as a man that is brooding on evil.

Now did a third draw nigh them, Philoetius, master of neatherds,  
Leading a cow that was barren and fat-fed goats for the suitors.  
Them had the ferrymen brought from the mainland (as many a mortal  
Also they ferry across, whosoever arrives at the crossing).  
These when he safely had tethered beneath the reëchoing portal,  
Up to the side of the swineherd he came and addressed him a question :

(Odysseus) "Swineherd, who is the stranger, I pray—this man that is newly  
Come as a guest to the house? What race doth he boast to belong to?  
XX  
1113-1209 Where is the place of his birth, and which is the land of his fathers?  
Hapless he seems; but in form he is like to a lord and a chieftain;  
Yea and the gods mar often a man that is driven to wander—  
Fate that can hap to a ruler himself, if they spin him misfortune."  
Thus as he spake he approached and his right hand offered in welcome;  
Then he uplifted his voice and with swift-winged words he addressed him:  
"Welcome, father and stranger! I wish thee in future a fortune  
Happier. Now, as it seems, thou'rt holden of many an evil.  
Father of all, great Zeus! More baneful is none of immortals!  
Ne'er dost thou feel compassion for mortals although thou begett'st them,  
Making them ever to dwell with misfortune, with pain and with sorrow.  
E'en as I saw him I sweated, and tears come flooding mine eyes still  
While I remember Odysseus—for, ah, I am certain that he too  
Thus in a raiment of rags goes roaming from people to people,  
Haps it indeed that he still is alive and beholdeth the sunlight.  
Should he however be dead and gone to the mansion of Hades,  
Woe to me! Woe for Odysseus, my good dear master, who set me  
Over his kine, as a youngster among Cephallenian people!  
These are growing unspeakably many: with none of the chieftains  
Waxing and flourishing thus is the breed of the broad-browed cattle.  
Ay, but I now am commanded by others, and batten my cattle  
Only for strangers to eat. Of the heir in the palace they reckon not,  
Neither the wrath of the gods do they fear. Nought else do they long for  
Save to divide the estate of my lord, who so long is unheard of.  
Many and many a time with my heart in the depth of my bosom  
This I revolve: 'twere wrong, while liveth the son of my master,  
Taking the cows to abandon the country and make for another,  
Some far alien land; but methinks it is worse to remain here,  
Sitting and guarding my cattle for others, and suffering hardships.  
Ay and indeed long since I had found some powerful chieftain  
Whither to flee—for I vow it is scarce endurable sometimes;  
Still I am always a-thinking of him—poor master!—and dreaming  
How he shall come and shall scatter the suitors in rout from the palace."

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
"Neatherd, seeing thou seemst not a man that is evil or foolish  
(Nay, I confess it myself, in thy thoughts much wisdom is present),  
Therefore a thing will I say, and with solemn oath will confirm it:  
First then witness it Zeus, and the table at which I am welcomed,  
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Yea and the hearth, to the which I am come, of the noble Odysseus,  
While thou art here in the mansion Odysseus shall come to his homestead,  
Ay and with thine own eyes, if thou wilt, thou'lt surely behold him  
Slaughtering all of the suitors, who dare in his palace to lord it."

*Odysses*

XX

*11-201*

Him gave answer the man who as cowherd tended the cattle :  
"Would, O stranger, that Zeus might grant to thy words a fulfilment !  
Then thou'dst learn of my strength and behold how ready my hands be."  
Likewise spake Eumaeus, and calling on all the immortals  
Prayed for Odysseus the wise to return once more to his homeland.

Now as the men stood there conversing the one with the other,  
Secretly planning the doom and death of the son of Odysseus  
Plotted the suitors—but lo, on the left came flying an eagle,  
King of the uppermost air, with a quivering dove in his talons.  
Then spake Amphinomus to the others, and thus he addressed them :  
"Friends, I am sure it will never succeed, this thing that we purpose,  
Murdering Telemachus. Let us think once more of the banquet !"  
Thus spake Amphinomus, and his words pleased all of the others.  
So they betook them at once to the palace of godlike Odysseus.  
Here, when aside they had laid on the chairs and the couches their mantles,  
Fatlings they slew of the goats and the heaviest beasts of the sheepfold ;  
Also they slew fat hogs and a cow that was brought from the pasture,  
Roasted the livers and portioned the messes, and then in the wine-bowls  
Mingled the wine ; and the cups were carried around by the swineherd,  
While by Philoetius, master of herdsmen, in beautiful baskets  
Bread was dispensed, and the wine poured out by the goatherd Melantheus.  
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them.

Telemachus with a crafty intent now seated Odysseus  
Nigh to the threshold of stone of the strong-built banqueting-chamber.  
Wretchedly poor was the chair that he placed him, and small was the table.  
Then of the liver he served him a portion, and filled him a goblet,  
Even a beaker of gold ; and he spake these words and addressed him :  
"There now, sit at thy ease midst nobles, and quaff of the wine-cup.  
Violent act or abuse . . . it is I that am going to stop it,  
Spite of the suitors. We keep not a tavern for common resorters  
Here in the house ; 'twas the home of Odysseus ; to me he bequeathed it.  
Listen, ye suitors ! I beg you to curb all spirit of brawling,  
Ay and of violent acts. No quarrel and strife shall arise here !"

Thus did he speak and the men, all biting their lips in amazement,  
Marvelled at Telemachus and the dauntless words he had uttered.  
Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed them :  
" Though it is hard to submit, let us suffer, Achaeans, in silence  
Telemachus and his talk ! He is even beginning to threaten !  
Well, it was Father Cronion that stayed it—or else we had stopped him  
Chattering here in the hall, though mightily fluent his tongue be."  
Thus spake Antinous ; but the youth recked nought of his gibings.

Meantime up from the city was coming the sacred oblation  
Led by the heralds ; and soon did the long-haired sons of Achaea  
Gather them under the shadowy grove of the archer Apollo.

Now when the outside meat they had roasted and drawn from the skewers  
All they apportioned and sat them adown to a glorious banquet.  
Also in front of Odysseus a portion was set by the servants  
Like to the share that they all had received ; since so had commanded  
Telemachus, dear son of the hero godlike Odysseus.

Nowise willed it Athena to suffer the arrogant suitors  
Still to refrain from insulting contempt, for she wished the resentment  
Deeper to sink in the heart of Odysseus the son of Laertes.  
Now in the band of the suitors was one that was utterly lawless ;  
Ctesippus was his name, and he lived in the island of Samé.  
He too, trusting the wondrous extent of his wealthy possessions,  
Courtied the wife of Odysseus, the lord who so long was unheard of.  
Such was the fellow that now to the insolent suitors addressed him :  
" Listen, ye high-born suitors ! allow me to tell you of something !  
See, they've served to the stranger a portion (and well he deserves it !)  
Like to the rest. 'Twere truly a wrong and unfair to neglect him,  
Guest as he seemeth of Telemachus—like all that arrive here.  
Lo, I will give him the gift of a guest : he is free to present it  
Unto the woman that tendeth the bath, or to any he listeth,  
Any a drudge in the whole of the palace of godlike Odysseus."  
Spake, and with strong broad hand outstretched to a basket beside him  
Lifted the foot of an ox—and he hurled ; but Odysseus escaped it,  
Quietly swerving aside with the head ; and he smiled in his spirit  
Grimly enough, while smit was the strong-built wall by the ox-foot.  
Then spake Telemachus, as he turned to the man and rebuked him :  
" Verily, friend Ctesippus, thy soul had a lucky escape there !  
Missed was thy mark—for the stranger himself evaded thy missile ;

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Else with my sharp-edged spear had I smitten thee through in the middle.  
So had thy funeral busied thy father instead of thy wedding  
Here in my halls ; for I vow in my house so grossly and rudely  
None shall behave. I am come to discretion, and well can distinguish  
All that is good or is bad—no more I'm a child as aforetime.  
Truly before, I allow, we endured it, beholding in silence  
Slaughter of flocks and of herds, and the wine all drunk and exhausted,  
Ay and the bread. It is hard for the one to be fighting the many.  
Come now, cease from the ills that ye do and the ills ye intend me !  
Else, if already ye long with the edge of the sword to destroy me,  
Far more willing I were—yea verily better I hold it—  
Thus to be slain than for ever to see such shameful procedure,  
Guests disgracefully treated and servant-maids of the household  
Haled by the men in the halls of my beautiful home to dishonour.”

So did he speak ; and they sat all utterly silent and speechless,  
Till at the last found voice Ageláus, the son of Damastor :  
“ Listen, my friends ! When the word that is spoken is spoken with justice,  
None should surely be wroth with the speaker and answer in anger.  
Neither maltreat, I beseech you, the stranger, nor other soever,  
None of the drudges that serve in the palace of godlike Odysseus.  
Also to Telemachus and his mother I venture to offer  
Gentle advice—let them lay it to heart, both one and the other :  
While your spirit that dwells in the depths of the bosom within you  
Hoped for Odysseus the wise to return once more to his homeland,  
None could deem it a wrong that ye waited, nor suffered the suitors  
Here in the house to resort ; since thus it was certainly better,  
Should peradventure Odysseus arrive and appear at his homestead.  
Now it is plain however that never again he is coming.  
Wherefore go to thy mother and sit at her side and persuade her,  
Bidding her marry the best of the men, whose offer is greatest.  
Then thou'lt live on the wealth of thy father in peace and in gladness,  
Eating and drinking, and she will attend to the house of another.”

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“ Nay, Agelaus, I swear it by Zeus and the griefs of my father,  
Far from his Ithacan home now perished or roaming as exile,  
Not by myself is her marriage delayed—nay, rather I bid her  
Wed with the man of her choice. Great gifts will I add as her dowry.  
Still, 'twere shameless, I think, from the palace to drive her unwilling,  
Giving her orders to quit. May heaven forbid that I do so !”



*Odyssey*    Thus spake Telemachus, and, excited by Pallas Athene,  
XX    Laughter unquenchable rose. But she wildered the wits of the suitors.  
1.60 - 3.84    Strangely, as coming from alien voices, resounded the laughter.  
Dabbled with gore was the meat of the banquet. The eyes of the feasters  
Floated in tears, and the minds of the men were set upon wailing.

Then did the seer divine, Theoclymenus, speak and address them :  
"Ah, unfortunate men ! What horror is this that has happened ?  
Shrouded in night are faces and heads. To the knees it descendeth.  
Out of it flash forth wails. All cheeks are flooded with teardrops.  
Yea and the walls are spattered with blood, and the beautiful alcoves.  
See too, crowded with ghosts is the porch and crowded the courtyard,  
Hurrying down to the darkness of Erebus ! Out of the heaven  
Withered and gone is the sun, and a poisonous mist is arising."

Thus did he speak ; but they all right merrily laughed as they heard him.  
Eurymachus then called, prince Polybus' son, to his comrades :  
"Sure he is mad, this guest that is newly arrived from a distance !  
Come now quickly, my lads, and escort him away from the palace  
Out to the square—since here he complaineth of night and of darkness !"  
Then did the seer divine, Theoclymenus, answer him saying :  
"Eurymachus, I shall need not to bid thee vouchsafe me an escort.  
Both of mine eyes I possess, and a couple of ears and of feet too,  
Also a mind in my head well furnished—nor truly a bad one.  
So I will rise and be gone, since clearly I see a disaster  
Coming ; and none of you all shall be able to shun or avert it,  
None of the suitors by whom in the house of the godlike Odysseus  
Men are treated with insult and plann'd are wicked devices."  
These words uttered, he went from the pleasant abodes of the palace  
Unto the home of his host Peiraeus, who gladly received him.

Meantime many a suitor, exchanging a glance with another,  
Girded at Telemachus to provoke him, deriding his guest-friends,  
While from the midst would speak some insolent youth and address him :  
"Telemachus, thou art sure most luckless of men in thy guest-friends,  
Such as the nobody here thou art harbouring—gluttonous vagrant,  
Begging for ever for wine and for victuals and wholly unskilled in  
Matters of work or of war—just living on earth as a burden.  
Then, as another again, this fellow that rose as a prophet !  
Nay now, take my advice ! 'twere verily wiser and better.  
Guests like these let us ship on a well-benched vessel and send them

Unto Sicilian folk—'twould pay thee enough for the trouble."

*Odyssey*

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Thus did the suitors deride : but the youth recked nought of their gibings.  
Silent he gazed at his father, for ever expecting to see him  
Suddenly stretch forth hands on the horde of the insolent suitors.

Now on the opposite side in her beautiful chair she was lying,  
Even the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelopeia ;  
Therefore to every word that was said in the hall she had listened.

Merrily thus midst laughter the men made ready the dinner,  
Dinner delightful, abundant—for many a beast they had slaughtered.  
Supper however was coming ; and ne'er was a supper unwelcome  
Such as the one by the hands of a goddess and valiant hero  
Soon to be served for the men whose wickedness made the beginning.



# ODYSSEY BOOK XXI

**N**OW did a thought that was sent by the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
Come to the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelopeia,  
Bidding her carry the bow and the cold grey axes of iron  
Into the hall for the contest—beginning of death for the suitors.  
So by the stair that ascended aloft to her chamber she mounted.

Here with her fair strong hand she selected a well-curved door-key,  
Beautiful, bronzen ; and fitted thereon was an ivory handle.  
Then to the room of the treasure she went with her maiden attendants,  
Even the innermost room where stored was the wealth of her husband,  
Many a rich-wrought treasure of bronze and of gold and of iron.  
Here was the back-bent bow of Odysseus and here was the quiver  
Holding the shafts, full many an arrow, the bringer of anguish,  
Gifts of a friend he had met when he journeyed to fair Lacedaemon,  
Iphitus, Eurytus' son, who was like the immortals of heaven.  
Once in Messenian land they had lighted the one on the other,  
E'en at the house of the wise prince Orsilochus—for Odysseus  
Thither had come for a debt that was owing from all of the people,  
Since in their well-benched vessels Messenian robbers had carried  
Off from the Ithacan isle three hundred sheep with the shepherds.  
These to recover Odysseus had come from afar as an envoy.  
Though but a lad he was sent by his sire and the rest of the elders.  
Iphitus also was there ; he had lost, and was seeking, his horses,  
Twelve of them, mares, each one with a strong young mule at the udder.  
(These same mares proved later his bane and the cause of his murder  
While he was guest of the man who was son of Cronion, the dauntless  
Hercules—wight that was guilty of many a terrible action ;  
Yea and he slew him, although as a friend he was there in his homestead,  
Wickedly slew him despite of the wrath of the gods and the table  
Spread by his hands for a stranger ; and, after the man he had murdered,  
Also the strong-hoof'd horses he kept for himself at his palace.)  
Questing for these he had met with Odysseus, and gave him the weapon,  
Even the bow that the great prince Eurytus carried, and later  
Left to his son when he died in the high-roofed hall of his homestead.  
Him with a sharp-edged sword and a powerful lance did Odysseus  
Also present—a beginning of intimate friendship ; but neither  
Shared of the bread of the other before by the son of Cronion  
Murdered was Iphitus, Eurytus' son, who was like the immortals.  
Such was the friend who had given the bow ; but the godlike Odysseus

Never, when warring he went and aboard of his black-hulled vessels,  
Took it, but aye it remained, of his well-loved friend a remembrance,  
Lying at home, or alone in his native country he bare it.

Now when she came to the room of the treasure, that fairest of women,  
Up to the threshold of oak she advanced, which once by the joiner  
Smoothly was planed and was cut to the line with the skill of a master  
(Posts he had fitted thereto and the glittering doors to the door-posts).  
Straightway deftly she loosened the strap that was bound to the handle ;  
Then she inserted the key, and the bolt of the portal she shot back,  
Pressing with accurate aim ; and as grazing alone in a meadow  
Bellows a bull, thus bellowed the doors of the beautiful portal,  
Smit by the stroke of the key ; and they both flew open before her.  
Then on the high-built dais she stept, where many a coffer  
Stood, in the which were lying her treasures of fragrant apparel.  
Here outstretching her hand to the bow of Odysseus, she took it  
Off from the peg where sheathed in its glittering case it was hanging.  
Then did she seat her, and laying it down on her knees she beheld it  
Bitterly weeping, and drew from its cover the bow of her husband,  
Till, when at last she had sated her soul with her weeping and wailing,  
Back to the hall she betook her and came to the arrogant suitors  
Bearing the back-bent bow, and carrying also the quiver  
Laden with shafts—full many an arrow, the bringer of anguish.  
Maidens as well came after her bearing a basket with treasures,  
Iron and bronze, full many a prize once gained by Odysseus.

So when at last she had come to the suitors, that fairest of women  
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment,  
Holding in front of her cheeks soft folds of her glistening head-dress.  
There as she stood, with a trusty attendant on this and on that side,  
Straightway unto the suitors she spake, and thus she addressed them :  
“Listen, ye arrogant suitors incessantly haunting my homestead,  
Vexing it ever and ever again with your bouts and your banquets  
These long years that my lord was away—and never a pretext  
Other in all that ye said did ye offer (nor could ye invent one)  
Save that ye longed to possess me as wife and to force me to marry.  
Come now, suitors ! Behold, since such is the prize ye compete for,  
Here is the bow of the godlike Odysseus ! I lay it before you.  
Who with his hands most easily stringeth the bow of my husband,  
Should he be able to shoot clean through all twelve of the axes,  
Him will I follow as wife, and shall bid farewell to this mansion,  
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Beautiful, beautiful home of my girlhood, abounding in comfort,  
Home that I often in future, methinks, in my dreams shall remember."

*Odyssey*  
XXI  
285-319

Thus did she speak, and she bade Eumaeus, the good old swineherd,  
Place for the suitors the bow and the cold grey axes of iron.  
Bursting in tears Eumaeus received them and laid them in order.  
Also the cowherd lamented, beholding the bow of his master.  
Then spake Antinous and addressed them and rudely rebuked them :  
" Babies and boors, that regard but the things of the day as it passeth !  
Wherefore, you couple of blubbering fools, thus trouble the lady,  
Stirring the heart in her bosom again, when her spirit already  
Lay o'erwhelmed in its grief at the loss of her well-loved husband ?  
Nay now, sit at the feast and be silent—or, must ye be weeping,  
Get to the door and be gone !—But the bow . . . ye can leave it behind you.  
Fatal, methinks, 'twill prove as a test for the suitors. I trow not  
Easy to bend and to string is the smooth-wrought bow that I see there.  
Yea, for of all of us here there's never a man that is present  
Such as of yore was Odysseus. I saw him myself and remember,  
Well I remember, although I was only a child when I saw him."  
Thus did he speak, while deep in his heart he was hoping to prove him  
First of his fellows at stringing the bow and at piercing the axes.  
Ay but as first of them all he was fated to taste of an arrow  
Sped by the hands of the noble Odysseus, whom lately he flouted,  
Sitting at meat in his hall and inciting the others against him.

Then spake Telemachus, young valiant prince, to the suitors :  
" Heavens ! it seemeth that Father Cronion has robbed me of reason !  
Here is my own dear mother, although of a good understanding,  
Saying she meaneth to follow a stranger and part from her homestead.  
Yea and I laugh and rejoice when I hear it . . . as reft of my senses !  
Well now, suitors, behold ! Since such is the prize ye compete for,  
Even a lady unrivalled in all of the land of Achaea,  
Also in Pylos the fair, and in Argive land and Mycene,  
Nay on the Ithacan island itself and the dim dark mainland . . .  
Ah, but ye know it yourselves, and my praise of my mother is needless.  
Come, and delay no more with excuses ! Arise, and defer not  
Longer the trial of stringing the bow ! Let us see what shall happen !  
Ay and myself were fain to attempt this bow of my father.  
Should I be able to string it and pierce with an arrow the axes,  
Then shall my mother the queen not leave me alone in my sorrow,  
Quitting her home as the wife of a stranger, nor leave me behind her,

E'en as he spake from his neck he unfastened his mantle of crimson,  
Sprang to his feet, and unbuckled the sharp-edged sword from his shoulder.  
Firstly the axes he fixed in the ground in a trench that he hollowed,  
One long trench for them all, and straight in a line he arranged them,  
Stamping around them the earth—And astonishment seized the beholders,  
Seeing him set them in order, although he had learnt it from no one.  
Then to the threshold he went and to master the bow he attempted.  
Thrice did he make it to quiver in trying to pull it towards him,  
Thrice did his strength give way ; but he hoped nathless in his spirit  
Still to be able to string it and pierce with an arrow the axes ;  
Yea he had strung it perhaps, for the fourth time mightily tugging,  
Had not his eager attempt been checked by a nod from Odysseus.  
Then did the valiant prince once more to the suitors address him :  
"Heavens, methinks I shall prove in the end but a coward and weakling !  
Else, maybe, I am still but a youth, nor as yet can I trust me  
Unto the strength of my hands, should any assail me in anger.  
Come now, ye that excel me in bodily strength and in manhood,  
Make an essay of the bow ! Let us hasten to finish the contest !"

These words spoken, the bow from his hands he surrender'd, and placed it  
Leaning aslant on the door smooth-polished and finely compacted ;  
Also the shaft keen-pointed he propped by the beautiful bow-tip.  
So he reseated himself on the chair from the which he had risen.

Then spake Antinous, Euphithes' son, and addressed them :  
"Rise now, all of my mates ! From the left hand make a beginning,  
E'en from the place at the which he beginneth that filleth the wine-cups."  
So spake Antinous, and his words pleased all of the others.  
First of them Oenops' son, Leiodes, rose at his bidding.  
He was the priest and diviner, and nigh to the beautiful wine-bowl  
Innermost ever he sat ; and alone in his heart he detested  
All the infatuate deeds of the suitors, and viewed them with anger.  
Such was the man who was foremost to handle the bow and the arrow.  
Up to the threshold he went, and to master the bow he attempted,  
Nor was he able to string it, for ere it was bent he was weary  
Straining his unworn delicate hands ; and he said to the suitors :  
"Friends, I am wholly unable to string it. I leave it to others.  
Ay and this weapon shall rob full many a man, and a brave one,  
Soon of his life and his spirit. Indeed far better I hold it



So to be slain than to live and for ever to fail in obtaining  
All that we vainly expected resorting incessantly hither.  
Many a man of us still has a hope in his heart and a longing  
Penelopeia to marry, the wife of the godlike Odysseus ;  
Yet I believe when he seeth the bow and essayeth to bend it  
Then 'twere wiser a wife of the long-robed maids of Achaea  
Other to seek and to win with his bride-gifts, letting the lady  
Marry the wooer that giveth the most and is destined to wed her."

These words spoken, the bow from his hands he surrender'd and placed it  
Leaning aslant on the door smooth-polished and finely compacted ;  
Also the shaft keen-pointed he propped by the beautiful bow-tip.  
So he reseated himself on the chair from the which he had risen.

Then spake Antinous and addressed him and rudely rebuked him :  
"Leiodes, what word from the door of thy lips hath escaped thee ?  
Grievous, insulting, I hold it. It rouses my anger to hear thee.  
What ! shall a bow like this rob many a man and a brave one  
Soon of his life and his spirit because thou failest to bend it ?  
Nay, at thy birth, I assure thee, the lady thy mother produced not  
One that was meant for a drawer of bows or a shooter of arrows.  
Others among the illustrious suitors will easily string it."  
Thus did he speak, and he called to Melanthius master of goatherds :  
"Ho there ! kindle a flame on the hearth of the palace, Melantheus !  
Station a good-sized settle anigh with a cover of sheepskin,  
Fetch us moreover a ball of the fat that is stored in the larder ;  
Then shall the young men melt it, and oiling the bow with the unguent  
Make an essay at the stringing and speedily finish the contest."  
Quick at the word was rekindled the restless flame by Melantheus.  
Nigh it a good-sized settle he placed with a cover of sheepskin ;  
Also he fetched them a ball of the fat that was stored in the larder.  
This did the young men melt, and they made the attempt ; but they could not  
String it. The strength for the feat was in all of them utterly wanting.  
Antinous held back and Eurymachus the heroic,  
Chief of the suitors and stronger by far than the others and braver.

Now those twain had withdrawn them, the one by the side of the other,  
Even the cowherd and also the swineherd of godlike Odysseus.  
Following after them went from the palace Odysseus the hero,  
Till, when at length they had passed outside of the gate and the courtyard,  
Then he uplifted his voice and with words right gentle addressed them :

“Cowherd, and thou, Eumæus, a thing I am wishing to tell you.  
Or shall I hide it within me? My spirit commands me to say it.  
What is it like you'd prove in assisting Odysseus, if haply  
All of a sudden he came from afar and a deity brought him?  
Would ye decide on defending the suitors or helping Odysseus?  
Speak to me openly! Answer as heart and as spirit command you.”  
Him gave answer the man who as cowherd tended the cattle:  
“Zeus, our Father! if only thou gav'st this prayer a fulfilment:  
O for the master to come! to be brought by a deity hither!  
Then thou'dst learn of my strength and behold how ready my hands be!”  
Likewise spake Eumæus, and calling on all the immortals  
Prayed for Odysseus the wise to return once more to his homeland.

Now when he saw that the hearts of the men were steadfastly loyal,  
Once more speaking he gave them an answer, and thus he addressed them:  
“Lo, it is I that am here in my home! Great hardships I suffered.  
Now in the twentieth year I am come to the land of my fathers.  
Yea and I know that my coming is wished for by none of the others,  
Only by you of my thralls; for I hear none other beside you  
Offering prayer to the gods to restore me again to my homeland.  
Only to you will I say what shall happen and truly disclose it.  
Should God grant it indeed that I vanquish the arrogant suitors,  
Each of you then I will give an estate, and a wife I shall give him;  
Homes near mine ye shall have new-built, and ever in future  
Even as comrades and brothers of Telemachus I shall treat you.  
Come now, also a proof I will give you infallibly certain,  
So that ye surely shall know me and feel in your hearts an assurance.  
Here is the wound which once by a boar's white tusk was inflicted  
While with the sons I was hunting of Autolycus on Parnassus.”

Spake, and withdrawing his rags from the wound's great scar he disclosed it.  
Then those twain, when they looked at it well and had marked it for certain,  
Sobbed as they fell on the neck of Odysseus the wise and embraced him,  
Lovingly kissing his head and his shoulders in token of welcome.  
So did Odysseus as well, and kissed them on hand and on forehead;  
Yea and the light of the sun were set on the long lamentation  
Had not Odysseus himself thus bid them refrain and addressed them:  
“Cease ye from wailing and weeping, I pray, lest any perceive it  
Issuing forth from the hall, and return to the house and inform them.  
Now let us enter again, not going together, but singly,  
Firstly myself, then you; and let this be arranged and agreed to:

None, I am sure, of the others (I mean of the arrogant suitors)  
E'er will allow that the bow shall be placed in my hands, or the quiver.  
Therefore, my good Eumaeus, when bearing it round in the palace  
Manage to give me the bow in my hands; then order the women,  
Carefully barring the doors fast-closed of the inner apartment,  
There to remain; and if any shall notice a din or a groaning  
Here in the hall of the men, let her nowise venture to issue  
Forth of her chamber, but still at her task keep silently working.  
Thou, O honest Philoetius, see to the gate of the courtyard;  
Shut it and bolt it and fasten a rope right firmly about it."

These words spoken, he entered the pleasant abodes of the palace;  
There he re-seated himself on the chair from the which he had risen.  
Likewise entered the twain—those thralls of the godlike Odysseus.

Now it was Eurymachus that was trying the bow, and on all sides  
Warming it, holding it close to the heat of the flame; but to string it  
E'en thus wholly he failed; and he groaned in his valiant spirit  
Sorely enraged, and aloud to the others he called and addressed them:  
"Heavens! I truly am grieved—for myself and for all of you others.  
Not for my marriage so much I lament, though great is my sorrow;  
Many a woman is yet to be found of the race of Achaea  
Here in the sea-girt Ithacan isle and in many a city.  
Rather I grieve that in strength we're wholly unable to vie with  
Godlike Odysseus; for here is his bow, and we have not the power  
Even to string it—a thing that with men unborn will disgrace us."

Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed him:  
"No, no, Eurymachus! it shall never be thus—and thou know'st it.  
Even to-day in the land is the feast of the Archer Apollo,  
Festival solemn, on which none bendeth a bow. Let us calmly  
Lay it aside; and the axes . . . methinks 'twere better to leave them  
Just so standing, for none, I am sure, will be likely to steal them,  
Venturing nigh to the house of Odysseus the son of Laertes.  
Come, let the bearer of wine now prime us the cups for libation.  
After the wine we will stow us the well-crooked bow, and will order  
Early the morrow Melanthius master of goatherds to bring us  
Goats, prime beasts, from the whole of his flock as the fattest selected.  
So we shall offer the meat of the thighs to the Archer Apollo,  
Then once more of the bow make trial and finish the contest."  
Thus spake Antinous, and his words pleased all of the others.

*Odysseus* Forthwith water was poured on the hands of the guests by the henchmen ;  
XXXI Then did the pages, upwreathing on high with the liquor the wine-bowls,  
Bear it around to them all, first priming the cups for libation.

Now when at last they had poured and had drunk to their souls' satisfaction,  
Thus with a crafty design deep-plotting Odysseus addressed them :  
“ List to my words, O suitors of far-famed Penelopeia,  
So that I utter a thing that the heart in my bosom commands me.  
Chiefly to Eurymachus and to Antinous the heroic  
Now I direct my request, for in this he has spoken with reason,  
Bidding you cease the essay of the bow and to leave it to heaven ;  
God will to-morrow the victory grant to the man that he chooseth.  
Give me however the weapon—the smooth-wrought bow. I will test me  
Here in your presence my hands and my strength, if I still am possessed of  
Power as once in the supple and well-knit limbs of my body,  
Or if a wanderer's life with its beggarly fare hath destroyed it.”

Thus did he speak ; and they all were filled with unspeakable anger,  
Fearing the smooth-wrought bow might haply be strung by the stranger.  
Then spake Antinous and addressed him and loudly rebuked him :  
“ Wretched ridiculous stranger ! thy wits seem utterly wanting.  
Art not content to be sitting at ease midst nobles and princes  
Here at the banquet and share in the feast ? Wilt also be spying,  
Listing to all that we say and converse ? None other beside thee,  
Being a stranger and beggar as thou, e'er ventured to listen.  
Wine honey-sweet hath infected thy senses, as many a mortal  
Often it harms if he drains it in greedy immoderate potions.  
Wine was the bane that distracted the wits of the Centaur, the famous  
Eurytion, in the palace of Peirithöus great-hearted,  
While in the Lapithan land ; for when wine had confounded his senses  
Roused to a fury he wrought foul deeds in the house of the monarch.  
Wrath then fell on the band of the heroes : rising in anger  
Out of the house by the portal they dragged him, his ears and his nostrils  
Shorn by the pitiless steel ; and with wits distracted he wandered  
Bearing the load of his sin with a mind that was weakened by madness.  
Hence the beginning was made of the quarrel of men with the Centaurs ;  
Yea and he first on himself brought ruin when maddened by drinking.  
Also for thee great woe I predict if thou haply accomplish  
Stringing the bow ; for of none thou shalt gain thee protection and kindness  
Here in the land, but anon in a black-hulled ship we shall send thee  
Over to Echetus, king of the mainland and maimer of mortals,

Whence thou shalt never escape with thy life. So quietly sit there!  
Drink an thou wilt, but incite not a quarrel with men that be younger!"

*Odyssey*

XXXI

11-12

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia:  
"Antinous, 'twere truly a wrong and unfair to refuse him,  
Being the guest of my son, like others that come to the palace.  
Weenst thou perhaps, if the stranger in stringing the bow of Odysseus  
Were to succeed, on his hands and his strength not vainly relying,  
Me he shall lead to his home and shall make me his consort? I trow not!  
Neither, methinks, doth he hope it himself in the depth of his bosom.  
Wherefore none of you fret at the thought nor be troubled in spirit  
While at the banquet ye sit. 'Twere possible never and nowise!"

Then spake Polybus' son, prince Eurymachus, and addressed her:  
"Daughter of Icarius, O wise-souled Penelopeia,  
Ne'er did we think of his leading thee home—may heaven forfend it!  
Only we dreaded the talk and the tattle of men and of women,  
Lest it be said some day by an evilly-minded Achaean,  
'Lo these fellows a-wooing the wife of a man that excels them  
Greatly—for even his bow . . . they're wholly unable to string it,  
While that a stranger that came to the palace, a beggarly vagrant,  
Easily strung it and pierced with an arrow the axes of iron.'  
Thus will they speak, and for us such words would prove a dishonour."

Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia:  
"Eurymachus, fair fame in the land would never be given  
Unto the men that, affronting the chief of the people as ye do,  
Ruin his home. Then why do ye deem such words a dishonour?  
Lo, this stranger is tall; well built is his body and stalwart;  
Also he claims as his father a man that was brave and was upright.  
Give him the smooth-wrought bow! Nay, give! Let us see what will happen.  
This one thing will I say—it will certainly find a fulfilment:  
Should he be able to string it and win such fame of Apollo,  
Then I shall clothe him in beautiful raiment, in mantle and tunic,  
Give him moreover a lance that from men and from dogs shall protect him,  
Ay and a two-edged sword, and shall also provide him with sandals.  
Then I shall send him wherever his heart and his spirit shall call him."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
"Mother, of all the Achaeans is none entitled as I be  
Either to offer the bow to a man as I wish or refuse it.

T'

No one—neither the chiefs that in rockbound Ithaca lord it,  
Nor in the isles off Elian land, which pastureth horses—  
None of them, none, shall compel me unwilling if even I purpose  
Once and for all to bestow on the stranger the bow as a present.  
Now to thy chamber return and attend to thy own occupation,  
Even the loom and the distaff, and order thy maiden attendants  
Keep to their tasks; we men will attend to the bow and the shooting,  
All of us—chiefly myself; it is I that am lord of the household.”  
Full of amazement she turned her to go to the women’s apartment,  
Hiding the masterful words of her son deep down in her bosom.  
So, to her upper apartment ascending with maiden attendants,  
Here she lamented Odysseus, her well-loved husband, till gently  
Slumber was poured on her lids by the grey-eyed goddess Athene.

Now when the good old swineherd had taken the bow to convey it  
Unto the stranger a tumult was raised in the hall by the suitors,  
Many an insolent youth in the midst of them loudly exclaiming :  
“Where art thou taking the bow, thou detestable wretch of a swineherd ?  
Vagabond ! Soon shall the dogs thou hast bred as a guard of thy pig-sties  
Tear thee in pieces afar from the dwellings of man, if Apollo  
Showeth us favour, as well as the other immortals in heaven.”  
Thus did they speak, and at once did the swineherd who carried it lay it  
Down in alarm, since many with clamour assailed him ; but straightway  
Telemachus, who was standing apart, spake threatening loudly :  
“Come, dad, bring it along ! Thou’lt find it unpleasant obeying  
Every master that calls. Take care, or I surely shall chase thee  
Out to the fields and shall pelt thee with stones. I am younger and stronger.  
Ay and I would ’twere so with the suitors frequenting my homestead !  
Would I excelled them as much in the strength of my arm and in manhood.  
Soon were many a one sent forth on a road that he likes not  
Out of my palace, for nought they imagine but evil against me.”

Thus did he speak, but the whole of the suitors as soon as they heard him  
Merrily laughed, and allayed was the grievous wrath that their bosoms  
Harboured for Telemachus ; and the swineherd approaching anigh him  
Unto Odysseus the wise gave over the bow and the arrows.  
Then did he call forth Eurycleia the nurse and address her :  
“Telemachus commandeth thee, wise-souled Eurycleia,  
Carefully barring the doors fast-closed of the inner apartment,  
There to remain ; and if any shall notice a din and a groaning  
Here in the hall of the men, let her nowise venture to issue





THE STRINGING OF THE BOW





Forth of the chamber, but still at her task keep silently working."  
Thus did he speak, and the words that he uttered abode with her wingless.  
Firmly she bolted the doors of the fair-built women's apartment.

*Odysseus*

XXXI

582, 583

Then right stealthily out of the mansion Philoetius hastened ;  
Firmly he bolted the gate of the well-fenced palace enclosure.  
Under the portal was lying a rope of a twy-beaked galley  
Made of papyrus ; with this when the gates he had lashed he re-entered ;  
Here he re-seated himself on the chair from the which he had risen,  
Gazing intent at Odysseus, for now with the bow he was busy,  
Turning it hither and thither, to test it on this and on that side,  
Lest in his absence the worms peradventure had eaten the horn-tips.  
Meantime many a suitor was muttering thus to his neighbour :  
" Truly a judge of a bow and a cunning adept he appeareth !  
Either perhaps he possesses a weapon as this in his homestead,  
Else he intendeth to make him the like. How deftly he holds it,  
Turning it hither and thither, the knowing and mischievous vagrant !"  
Then would others again of the insolent youths make answer :  
" O for this fellow to gain from the gods all profit and glory  
Just in the selfsame measure wherein he succeeds with the stringing !"

Such words uttered the suitors. But now deep-plotting Odysseus,  
After with care he had handled the great strong bow and had viewed it,  
E'en as a man that is skilled with the lute and is practised in singing  
Easily stretches the string on a new-made peg of his phorminx,  
After attaching the ends of the chord tight-twisted of sheepgut,  
Thus with the great strong bow did Odysseus, and easily strung it.  
Then with his right hand seizing it firmly he tested the bowstring.  
Under his touch full sweetly it sang, as the voice of a swallow.

Now fell mighty confusion and rage on the suitors : their visage  
Changed ; while Zeus from the sky crashed terribly, giving a warning.  
Greatly exulting thereat long-suffering godlike Odysseus,  
Knowing the signal was sent by the all-wise Father Cronion,  
Seized on the keen-edged arrow that lay on the table beside him  
Bare (in the hollow quiver anigh lay all of the others,  
Ready—and soon it was fated for many Achaeans to taste them).  
Laying the shaft on the bridge and pulling the notch with the bowstring,  
E'en from the chair on the which he was sitting he shot, and the arrow  
Sped with an accurate aim, and it pierced through all of the axes  
Right from the first of the helves—straight through them ; & out of the last one

*Odysseus* Issued the bronze-tipped bolt ; and to Telemachus he addressed him :  
“Telemachus, thou art nowise shamed by the guest that is sitting  
Here in thy palace. I missed not the mark that was set me and laboured  
Little at stringing the bow, for my strength is as sound as aforetime,  
Not as the suitors assert with a scornful despite, to insult me.  
Now is the moment at hand ! Let us serve the Achaeans their supper  
While it is day !—and when supper is done find other amusement,  
Singing and dancing—for these are ever the crown of a banquet.”

Speaking, he nodded. At once, with his sharp sword girded about him,  
Telemachus, dear son of the godlike hero Odysseus,  
Laying his hand on a spear, sprang forth to the side of his father ;  
There by a chair on the threshold he stood with his glittering weapons.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XXII

**C**ASTING his beggarly raiment aside, deep-plotting Odysseus  
Leapt on the threshold of stone, still holding the bow and the quiver  
Laden with bolts ; and before him the swift-winged arrows he poured out  
Close to his feet on the floor ; and he spake, addressing the suitors :  
“ Lo, this fatal, calamitous contest is done—it is finished !

Now for a mark far other—a mark ne’er smit by a bowman !  
This will I choose me, and see if renown shall be sent by Apollo.”

Spake, and at Antinous directed the sharp-fanged arrow,  
Just as he paused at the moment of lifting a beautiful goblet,  
Golden, with handles at both of its sides ; and already he held it,  
Meaning to drink of the wine ; and of death no thought or suspicion  
Troubled his mind. (Would any believe in the midst of a banquet  
One man, single among so many, however audacious,  
Thus might compass his doom and plunge him in death and in darkness ?)  
Steadily aimed was the bolt of Odysseus : it struck on the gullet.  
Pierced was the delicate neck right through by the point of the arrow.  
Over he lurched ; from his hand dropt crashing the cup, and he lay there  
Mortally struck, while jetted a thick red stream of his life-blood  
Out of his nostrils. His foot, convulsively striking the table,  
Spurned it afar and upset it. Defiled lay all of the viands,  
Spilt on the ground, roast flesh with the bread. Then clamour and tumult  
Rose in the hall when the suitors beheld their comrade was fallen.  
Up from the seats at the table they leaped in a panic of terror,  
Eagerly peering around at the well-built walls to discover  
Either a shield or a spear strong-shafted ; but nothing they found there.  
Then on Odysseus they turned and with angry reviling assailed him :  
“ Stranger, in sooth thou’lt suffer for shooting at men ! In a contest  
Never again shalt thou share. Death certain and sudden awaits thee.  
Lo, thou hast murdered a man who was foremost of all of the princes  
Here in the Ithacan land—so Ithacan vultures shall eat thee.”  
Thus spake all, for they deemed of a truth that the stranger had killed him  
Not with intent. Ah, fools ! yea, foolish and blind, for they saw not  
Over the heads of them all impending the toils of destruction.

Glaring askance at the men, deep-plotting Odysseus addressed them :  
“ Dogs ! ye imagined me never returning again to my homestead  
Back from the land of the Trojans—and so laid waste my possessions,

Won by compulsion to lustful embraces the women, my servants,  
Yea and with guile came wooing my wife while still I was living,  
Neither afraid of the gods who inhabit the infinite heaven  
Nor that the vengeance of man could smite you hereafter. Behold now  
Over the heads of you all impending the toils of destruction !”  
Thus did he speak. Forthwith pale dread seized all of the suitors,  
Each one peering to 'scape from the doom that was swiftly approaching.  
Eurymachus was the one that alone found voice, and he answered :  
“ Art thou Odysseus the Ithacan, come once more to thy homeland,  
Truly thou speakest with right. Such things have wrought the Achaeans,  
Many and many infatuate deeds in thy palace and farmsteads.  
Lo now, he that was guilty of all here lieth before us,  
Antinous. It is he that alone these crimes hath incited.  
Not so much that he needed to wed or was longing for marriage ;  
No, his intent was another—but heaven refused to fulfil it—  
E'en to install as the king of the flourishing Ithacan people  
None but himself, and, catching thy son in an ambush, to slay him.  
Now he is dead, as he richly deserved. So spare us, thy people,  
Even thy own ! We will go each one to his tribe, and hereafter  
Each shall requite thee for all he has eaten and drunk in thy palace,  
Each one make an atonement of five score oxen in value.  
Also with bronze and with gold will we offer requital and soften  
Fully thy heart. Till then for thy wrath none truly can blame thee.”

Glaring askance at the man, thus spake deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Eurymachus, if ye give me the whole of the wealth of your fathers,  
All ye at present possess and all ye shall add to it later,  
Not e'en thus shall my hands be restrained nor shall cease from the slaughter  
Till I shall wreak my revenge to the full on the sins of the suitors.  
Now there lieth before you to fight, or to flee—if by fighting  
Any shall hope, or by fleeing, to save him from doom and destruction.  
Nay but I trow not a man shall escape from his utter perdition.”  
Thus as he spake were loosened the knees and the hearts of the suitors.  
Then spake Eurymachus once more as he turned to his comrades :  
“ Friends, it is vain ! The invincible might of his hands he will check not.  
Now he has got in his power the smooth-wrought bow and the quiver,  
Down from the threshold of stone he will shoot us, until he has slain us  
All, to a man. Let us turn our minds to the fury of battle.  
Draw ye ! and hold ye the tables before you to shield you as bucklers,  
Quenching his bolts so fatal and swift. Then, rushing upon him  
All in a body, attempt from the threshold and portal to drive him !

So let us get to the city and quickly arouse the alarm there !  
Then shall the shaft that the fellow has shot be the last of his lifetime."

*Odyssey*

XXII

77-115

These words loudly he uttered, and drawing his sword from the scabbard, Bronzen and sharpened on both of the edges, he leaped on Odysseus Terribly shouting ; but just at the moment the godlike Odysseus Loosened a bolt from the bow, and smiting his breast by the nipple Into the liver was driven the swift-winged shaft ; and his sword dropt Out of his hand to the ground ; then, staggering, over a table, All entangled around it, he fell and scattered the dishes On to the floor with the food and a twy-cupped bowl ; and his forehead Smote on the earth as he writhed in his agony, spurning the armchair Sharply with both of his feet. On his eyes then darkness descended. Amphinomus now rushed at Odysseus, the glorious hero, Charging him straight from the front with his sharp sword drawn from the scabbard, Hoping to drive him away from the portal ; but ere he had reached him Telemachus from behind with a bronze-shod javelin smote him Right in the midst of the back ; and out of his breast it protruded. Crashing he fell, and he struck on the ground with the whole of his forehead. Telemachus sprang back, but his long-stemmed spear he had left there Planted in Amphinomus, for he feared lest one of the nobles While he was drawing it forth might suddenly rush to assail him, Giving a stab with a sword or a downward stroke of his weapon. Then to his well-loved father he ran, and reaching him quickly Stood at his side, and in haste these swift-winged words he addressed him : " Father, at once I will fetch thee a shield and a couple of lances, Also a helm all bronze with a visor to cover the temples. Then I will go and will clothe me in armour, and give to the swineherd Other, and also the cowherd. 'Tis better in arms to equip us." Forthwith answering spake these words deep-plotting Odysseus : " Run for them ! run !—while yet I have arrows enough to defend me ! Lest thus single I fail to resist and be thrust from the doorway."

Thus did he speak, and the youth, as his well-loved father commanded, Ran to the chamber in which were lying the glorious weapons. Out of them eight good lances and four of the shields he selected ; Four bronze helmets he chose him with horse-tails heavily crested, Carrying which he returned full quickly and came to his father. Firstly himself in a harness of bronze he invested ; and likewise Also the thralls, those twain, encased them in beautiful armour. Then at the side of the wise and wary Odysseus they placed them.

*Odyssey* He however, as long as the arrows sufficed to defend him,  
Aye at the suitors—at one or the other—entrapped in his mansion  
Aimed; and they fell as he smote them, the one by the side of the other.  
Then, when the shafts had deserted their lord and had failed him in shooting,  
Nigh to the post of the door of the massively builded apartment  
Propping the bow, on the face of the inside glistening house-wall,  
Over his shoulders he hung him a fourfold target of oxhide;  
Also a well-wrought helm on his stalwart head he adjusted,  
Plumed with the tail of a horse, which terribly nodded above it.  
Then two weapons he chose, bronze-bladed and powerful lances.

Now in the well-built wall was a high-raised postern inserted  
Flush with the slab of the threshold, and here from the hall was an outlet  
Through to a passage by doors well-fitting and double defended.  
This had Odysseus commanded the good old swineherd to look to  
Standing anigh it; for here was the only approach to the passage.  
Then from the midst of the suitors, addressing them, spake Agelaus:  
“Friends, is a man to be found who will mount by the postern and quickly  
Bring a report to the men of the city and rouse an alarm there?  
Then shall the shafts that the fellow has shot be the last of his lifetime.”  
Him forthwith gave answer Melanthius master of goatherds:  
“’Twere not possible, prince Agelaus, for terribly near it  
Opens the beautiful door of the court, and the mouth of the passage  
Offers a peril, for one strong man might hinder a thousand.  
Nay, let me fetch you, to arm you withal, both weapons and hauberks  
Out of the chamber in which (for I trow it was there and not elsewhere)  
All were stowed by this fine prince Telemachus and his father.”  
These words spoken, he clambered—Melanthius master of goatherds—  
Up by the loophole lights of the hall to the rooms of Odysseus.  
Thence twelve targets he took and a dozen of lances, and also  
Twelve bronze helmets he chose him with horse-tails heavily crested.  
Then he returned, and he brought them and gave them in haste to the suitors.

Now did the knee-joints quake and the inmost heart of Odysseus  
While he perceived them equipping themselves in the armour and shaking  
Long-stemmed spears in their hands; and he felt that his task was a great one.  
Quickly he turned to his son and with swift-winged words he addressed him:  
“Telemachus, is it one of the maids in the women’s apartment  
Plying this treacherous game—or else peradventure Melanthius?”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:  
“Father, the fault is my own that it happened, and guilty is no one



Other, for after I opened the fast-closed door of the chamber  
Wholly forgetting I left it, and some one cleverer spied it.  
Go now, good Eumaeus, and closing the door of the chamber  
Watch and discover if one of the women is doing this mischief;  
Else it is Dolius' son, I am certain, the goatherd Melantheus."  
Thus did the men hold converse and counsel the one with the other.

Then once more to the chamber Melanthius master of goatherds  
Went for the beautiful arms; and the good old swineherd, who saw it,  
Hastily called to Odysseus, who stood full near, and addressed him:  
"Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wary Odysseus,  
Yea it is even the fellow we thought, that impudent goatherd!  
See, he is going again to the room! Come, tell me exactly:  
Should I be able to master the man, were't better to slay him,  
Or shall I bring him to thee for his punishment, so that he pay for  
All of the many transgressions his malice devised in thy homestead?"  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
"I and my son will be able to cope with the insolent suitors,  
Holding them penned in the hall of the palace in spite of their fury.  
Ye two, twisting the hands and the feet of the fellow behind him,  
Drag him within. To his back then lashing a panel of boarding,  
Firmly attach to his body a rope strong-stranded, and haul him  
Up by a pillar aloft till he dangle anigh to the roof-beam,  
So that he live right long while suffering terrible torture."

Thus did he speak, and they listened attent to his words and obeyed them.  
Unto the chamber they went, and they saw him within; but he wist not;  
Right at the innermost end of the room he was searching for armour.  
So at the door they remained, each one by the side of a door-post.  
Soon came crossing the threshold Melanthius master of goatherds,  
Laden with arms: in the one of his hands was a beautiful helmet,  
While in the other he carried a buckler—a broad and an old one  
Spotted with mould (as a youngster the hero Laertes had borne it;  
Here long years it had lain, and the seams were loose of the oxhide).  
Suddenly leaping upon him they seized him, and into the chamber  
Dragged by the hair he was flung on the floor, and groaning he lay there,  
While with a bond right grievous they girded his hands and his ankles,  
Twisting the limbs well back and securely, as bid by the master,  
Even Laertes' son, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
Then to his body attaching a rope strong-stranded they hauled him  
Up by a pillar aloft till he dangled anigh to the roof-beam.

Here as he hung Eumæus the swineherd addressed him and mocked him :  
“Somewhat a long and a sleepless night thou’lt find it, Melantheus,  
Though right soft is the bed in the which thou art couched, as befits thee ;  
Nor shall the Dawn, when she newly ariseth from streams of the Ocean,  
Fail to appear to thee throned in her glory, as erst when thou dravest  
Goats of the flock to the palace to furnish a feast for the suitors.”

Thus held tight in the deadly embrace of the rope he was left there,  
While in the armour they clad them, and shutting the glistening portal  
Quickly returned to the master, the wise and wary Odysseus.  
Here then, breathing the fury of battle, they stood on the door-stone,  
Four of them, while in the hall stood many opposing them bravely.

Now did the daughter of Zeus draw nigh them, the goddess Athene,  
Once more likened to Mentor in voice and in bodily semblance.  
Then did Odysseus rejoice as he saw her, and spake to her saying :  
“Mentor, I pray thee, defend me from harm, and remember thy comrade,  
One that was dear and was kind to thee often—the friend of thy boyhood !”  
Thus did he speak, but he deemed ’twas Athena who stirreth the battle.  
Then from the depths of the hall great clamour was raised by the suitors,  
Foremost shouting abuse Agelaus the son of Damastor :  
“Mentor, I bid thee beware lest words of Odysseus beguile thee  
Thus with the suitors to fight and to stand by his side and defend him,  
Since I am sure we shall win us the end that we purpose in this wise :  
After the death of the twain (they shall die, both son and the father)  
Thou shalt be slain, thou too—such mischievous deeds thou art wishing  
Here in the palace to work. With thy head thou shalt pay for thy folly.  
So with the edge of the sword we shall rob you of strength to resist us ;  
Then thy possessions—the whole of the wealth in thy fields and thy mansion—  
All we shall mix with the wealth of Odysseus, and ne’er shall we suffer  
Either thy sons or thy daughters to dwell in the halls of thy homestead,  
Nor shall thy excellent wife go gadding about in the city.”  
So did he speak, and it maddened to fury the heart of Athene,  
Till on Odysseus she turned and with angry reproaches addressed him :  
“Now no longer, Odysseus, of worth is thy strength or thy manhood,  
Such as was thine when in battle for white-armed Helen the high-born  
Nine long years with the Trojans thou foughtest unweariedly ever,  
Slaughtering many and many a foe in the terrible warfare.  
Thine was the counsel that captured the wide-wayed city of Priam.  
How then ! Now thou art come to thy home and to all thy possessions,  
Why in the face of the suitors lament and behave as a weakling ?



THE SLAUGHTER OF THE SUTTORS



Nay, come hither, my friend, to my side ! Stand nigh and behold me,  
So shalt thou learn from my deeds what manner of mortal is Mentor,  
Alcimus' son, to requite thee a kindness by fighting thy foemen.”  
Thus did she speak, but she gave no victory full and decisive ;  
Still was she wishing to put to a trial the strength and the prowess  
Both of Odysseus himself and his valiant son ; and she vanished,  
Suddenly flying aloft to the smoke-stained roof of the palace,  
Where on a rafter she sat in the fashion and form of a swallow.

*Odyssey*

XXXI

258 - 111

Now took lead in the fray Agelaus the son of Damastor,  
Eurynomus, Demoptolemus, and the son of Polyctor  
Peisandrus, and Amphimedon and Polybus wily,  
Even the best and the bravest by far that of all of the suitors  
Still were living and fighting to save their lives from destruction  
(Others already the bow with the storm of its arrows had conquered).  
These Agelaus addressed and to all of them shouted, exclaiming :  
“ Friends, the invincible strength of the fellow is failing already !  
Lo too, Mentor is gone from his side, with his brags and his boastings,  
Leaving the four thus standing alone in the front of the doorway.  
Come, let us hurl with the spears—not all of us casting together :  
Six of us only attempt it at first, in the hope that the Father  
Grant that we gain us the glory of smiting and slaying Odysseus.  
Should this fellow be brought to a fall, of the others I reck not.”

Thus did he speak, and they cast at Odysseus with spears as he bade them,  
Eagerly hurling ; but all were foiled by the goddess Athene.  
Into the post of the door of the strong-built hall of the palace  
One of them drave, and the door close-fastened was smit by another,  
While in the wall struck lances of ash bronze-bladed and heavy.  
So when they thus had escaped unharmed from the spears of the suitors,  
Then to address them began long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“ Now for myself is the moment to speak and to bid you, my comrades,  
Into the throng of the suitors to hurl ; for they thirst to destroy us,  
Adding to all of their former iniquities murder and rapine.”  
Thus did he speak, and the four, their keen-edged lances uplifting,  
Hurled them with accurate aim. Demoptolemus by Odysseus,  
Euryades by the prince, Elatus by the swineherd was smitten,  
Peisandrus by the man who as neatherd tended the cattle.  
Biting the dust these lay on the floor's wide surface extended,  
While to the end of the hall in a panic retreated the others.  
Then dashed forward the four and drew their spears from the corpses.

Now once more did the suitors, the keen-edged lances uplifting  
Eagerly hurl ; but the most were foiled by the goddess Athene.  
Into the post of the door of the strong-built hall of the palace  
One of them drave, and the door close-fastened was smit by another,  
While in the wall struck lances of ash bronze-bladed and heavy.  
Amphimedon nathless smote Telemachus by the hand-joint  
Lightly, the edge of the blade scarce scratching the skin on the surface.  
Next with a long-stemmed spear Ctesippus hurled at the swineherd.  
Over his shield, just grazing the shoulder, it flew, and alighted.  
Then did the four on the side of the wise and wary Odysseus  
Once more hurl in the throng of the suitors the keen-edged lances.  
Smitten was Eurydamas by Odysseus the sacker of cities ;  
Amphimedon fell struck by the prince, Polybus by the swineherd,  
Ctesippus by the man who as neatherd tended the cattle ;  
Full on the breast he was struck, and the man exultingly mocked him :  
“ Ah, Polytherseus’ son, thou’rt fond of abuse, but I warn thee  
Never to yield to the folly of brag, but to leave the decision  
Unto the gods, whose wisdom is greater by far than a mortal’s.  
This is my gift in return for the foot of an ox that thou gavest  
Unto the godlike Odysseus when here in his home he was begging.”  
These words uttered the herd of the crook-horned kine ; and Odysseus  
Stabbed with the thrust of a spear long-shafted the son of Damastor ;  
Telemachus too smote Leiocritus, son of Euenor,  
Right in the midst of the flank, and the blade clean through him was driven ;  
Forward he fell and he struck on the ground with the whole of his forehead.

Then did Athena her aegis uplift, that is death to a mortal ;  
High in the roof she displayed it, appalling the minds of the suitors.  
Hither and thither they rushed in a panic, as kine on a pasture  
Scatter whene’er comes glancing and darting upon them a gadfly  
Late in the season of spring, when the days grow longer and longer ;  
While as the vultures with sharp-hooked beaks and with terrible talons  
Out of the hills come swooping and chasing the birds of the lowland  
Down from the clouds, till over the plain affrighted they flutter,  
Then pounce suddenly down and destroy them, and nought can defend them,  
Nor can they flee (men also rejoice at the chase and the capture),  
Thus those four gave chase in the hall to the horde of the suitors,  
Smiting around them to left and to right ; and a horrible groaning  
Rose midst lopping of heads ; and the floor ran red with the life-blood.

Leiodes, with a rush, now fell at the feet of Odysseus,

Clasping his knees in entreaty; and swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Lo, by thy knees I beseech thee to pity and spare me, Odysseus!  
None of the women, I swear, did I wrong in the halls of thy palace  
Either by act unseemly or word; yea, also the others  
Often I tried to restrain when I saw such folly committed.  
Natheless ne’er did they listen nor keep their hands from offending;  
So hath a terrible doom o’erwhelmed them because of their madness.  
What! shall an innocent priest who has harmed thee in nothing be slaughtered  
Even as those? Is it thus thou repayest me thanks for my goodness?”  
Glaring askance at the man deep-plotting Odysseus addressed him :  
“Nay, if indeed thou avowst thee as priest to the rabble of suitors,  
Often, I ween, in the hall of my palace a prayer thou hast offered  
Begging my happy return might still be afar from fulfilment,  
Ay and my well-loved wife might wed thee and bear thee an offspring.  
So thou art doomed to a death right bitter—nor hope to escape it.”  
These words uttered, he seized with his powerful hand on a broadsword  
Lying anear—dropt there on the floor by the prince Agelaus  
While he was dying—and into the nape of the kneeler he drave it.  
Down in the dust went rolling the head while still it was speaking.

Filled with a hope to escape from the darkness of death was the minstrel  
Phemius, Terpes’ son, who had sung at the feasts by compulsion.  
Holding his sweet-voiced lute in his tremulous fingers he stood there  
Nigh to the postern door; and his heart was divided within him  
Whether to slip from the hall and to flee to the altar for refuge  
Built in the court to omnipotent Zeus, where often aforetime  
Thighs of the cattle Odysseus had burnt, and his father Laertes,  
Or rush forward and grasp with his hands at the knees of Odysseus.  
Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better,  
Even to fall at the feet of the godlike son of Laertes.  
Therefore his hollow phorminx he set on the floor of the palace  
Next to a crater of wine and an armchair studded with silver,  
Then rushed forward and fell at the feet of Odysseus and begged him,  
Clasping his knees in entreaty; and swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Lo, by thy knees I beseech thee to pity and spare me, Odysseus.  
Also thyself wouldst suffer hereafter the pain of repentance  
Wert thou to slaughter a minstrel, who singeth for men and immortals.  
None but the god was my master: he breathed in my heart and he taught me  
All the enchantment of song; and now I am singing before thee  
E’en as my god. Then long not to smite at my throat and to slay me!  
Yea, and thy well-loved son prince Telemachus will assure thee



Ne'er was I willing to come to thy halls, far less was I wishful  
Here to resort with the suitors and sing to them after the banquet.  
Being the stronger by far and many in number, they forced me."  
Thus as he spake he was heard by the valiant son of Odysseus.  
Quickly the prince turned round and called to his father anigh him :  
" Hold ! he is innocent ! Strike not the man with thy weapon, my father !  
Medon the herald as well let us save, for he ever aforetime  
Tended me carefully while I was still but a child in thy homestead,  
Should he be living and not by Philoetius slain, or the swineherd,  
Neither discovered by thee while raging around in the palace."

Thus as he spake he was heard by the wise old Medon the herald.  
Cowering under a chair, wrapt round in a new-flayed oxskin,  
Hiding in hope to escape from the darkness of death, he was lying.  
Swiftly uprising from under the chair and unrolling the oxhide  
Forward he sprang, and he fell at the feet of the youth, in entreaty  
Clasping his knees, and with haste these swift-winged words he addressed him :  
" Friend, I am here ! Hold, hold, I beseech thee ! and call to thy father  
Lest in his furious might with the keen-edged sword he shall harm me,  
Angered because of the men—these suitors who wasted his substance  
Here in his palace ;—and thee they regarded as nothing, the madmen !"  
Then to the man spake thus with a smile deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" Be not afraid ! Thou art safe. He wishes to succour and save thee.  
So shalt thou feel in thy heart this truth, and shalt tell it to others :  
Better by far is the doing of good than the doing of evil.  
Go now, both of you. Go from the hall and away from the slaughter.  
Sit outside in the court, both sweet-voiced singer and herald,  
While I remain in the palace to finish my work, as I needs must."  
So did he speak, and the twain went forth from the hall to the courtyard.  
Here by the altar of Zeus the Almighty they sat, and around them  
Hither and thither they peered and of death were ever expectant.

Also Odysseus was peering around in the house, to discover  
Any remaining and hoping to 'scape death's terrible darkness.  
Weltering there in the dust and in blood lay all of the suitors,  
Fallen in many and many a heap, like fishes that boatmen  
Drag in a strong-meshed net from the grey-green depths of the ocean  
On to the beach of a hollow recess in the shore, and they lie there  
Heaped on the sand, all gasping in vain for the salt sea water,  
While by the heat of the sun drawn forth is the life from their bodies.  
Thus were lying in heaps, piled one on the other, the suitors.

Then at the last to his son deep-plotting Odysseus addressed him :  
"Telemachus, go call me the old nurse Eurycleia,  
So that I tell her a thing that is stirring my spirit within me."  
Thus did he speak, and the youth, as his well-loved father commanded,  
Rattled the door of the chamber and called nurse Eurycleia :  
"Hither in haste, old dame, who over the women attendants  
Keepest an eye and hast charge of them all in the palace as matron.  
Haste ! for my father is bidding thee come. He has something to tell thee."

Thus did he speak, and the word that he uttered abode with her wingless.  
Opening quickly the door of the fair-built women's apartment,  
Over the threshold she stept ; and the youth went onward before her,  
Till to Odysseus she came. In the midst of the dead he was standing,  
Smeared all over with blood and filthy with gore. As a lion,  
Leaving the place in the which he has eaten an ox of the farmstead,  
Goes on his way, and the whole of the chest and the cheeks of the monster  
Drip with the gore—and a terror befalleth the man who beholds him—  
So all smeared with the blood on his hands and his feet was Odysseus.

Now when the slain she beheld and the terrible blood, and in triumph  
Fain had exulted aloud (for she saw that the deed was accomplished),  
Then did Odysseus, perceiving her longing, restrain and rebuke her,  
While upraising his voice these swift-winged words he addressed her :  
"Woman, exult in thy heart, but in silence, subduing thy triumph.  
Triumphing over the slain is a deed unseemly, unholy.  
These hath the doom of the gods in the midst of their wickedness smitten,  
Seeing they treated alike all earth-born men with dishonour,  
Good no less than the bad—yea every one that approached them.  
So hath a terrible doom o'erwhelmed them because of their madness.  
Come now, tell me of all concerning the maids in the palace,  
Which of them honour me not and which are guiltless among them."  
Then did the dear old nurse make answer and thus she addressed him :  
"Well now, all of the truth in this matter, my child, I will tell thee.  
Here in thy palace the women that serve are fifty in number,  
Thralls that we trained of ourselves to attend to the work of the household,  
Such as the carding of wool and enduring the labours of bondage.  
Twelve of the maidens in all have trodden the path of dishonour,  
Neither respecting myself nor the mistress, Penelopeia.  
Telemachus was of late but a half-grown lad, and his mother  
Would not allow him to give his commands to the women attendants.  
Come now, might I ascend to the glistering upper apartment

*(Odysseus)* All to report to thy wife? Some deity sank her in slumber."  
*(Nurse)* Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus:  
*(Nurse)* "Nay, not yet shalt thou wake her; but go to the women and tell them  
Hither to come—those maidens that shamelessly acted aforetime."  
Thus did he speak, and the nurse went back to the inner apartment  
Bearing the message, and ordered the women to hasten their coming.

Now did Odysseus to Telemachus and the cowherd and swineherd  
Call, and he bade them approach, and with swift-winged words he addressed them:  
"See to removing the bodies, and order the women to help you.  
Then to the cleaning attend of the fine-wrought chairs and the tables.  
Wash them with water, and use soft porous sponges to rub them.  
Then, when the whole of the mansion is thoroughly cleansed and in order,  
Lead those maids from the hall, and bringing them out of the palace  
Down by the dome-roofed kitchen and faultless fence of the courtyard  
Smite them with swords long-bladed, until ye shall see them before you,  
All of them, dead. Yea, thus let them die and forget the delicious  
Rites of the goddess of love that they held with the suitors in secret."

Thus did he speak, and the women approached all huddled together,  
Uttering terrible wails as they shed great tears in abundance.  
Firstly the bodies they bore of the slain from the hall, and they set them  
Under the inside porch of the gate of the high-walled courtyard,  
Propping them one by the other, Odysseus directing the bearers,  
Forcing them also to work, for they carried the dead by compulsion.  
Then they attended to cleaning the fine-wrought chairs and the tables,  
Washed them with water, and used soft porous sponges to rub them.  
Meanwhile Telemachus and the cowherd and also the swineherd  
Scraping with shovels the floor of the strong-built hall of the mansion  
Cleared it—and all was collected and carried away by the women.

Now when the whole of the house they had cleansed and had set it in order,  
Leading the women away from the hall and forth from the palace  
Down to the dome-roofed kitchen and faultless fence of the courtyard,  
Into a corner they drove them that gave no hope of escaping.  
Then sage Telemachus spake first, addressing his comrades:  
"Heaven forbid that I put to a death so cleanly and honest  
Women as these, who brought on my head such shame and dishonour,  
Yea and the head of my mother, consorting in love with the suitors."  
Speaking, he seized on the rope of a blue-prowed vessel and lashed it  
High on a pillar, and over the dome of the kitchen he slung it,

Hoisting it tautly, that none might reach to the ground for a foothold.  
Then, as it haps if a covey of long-winged thrushes or pigeons  
Suddenly fall in the snares of a trap that is set in a thicket,  
Whither they flock for the night—but a bed right cruel receives them—  
Thus with their heads in a row stood all of the women, with nooses  
Over the neck, to a death most cruel and pitiful destined.  
So with their feet some moments they writhed—and soon it was over.

*Odyssey*

*XXI*

*467-501*

Out by the porch to the yard they conducted Melanthius also.  
First with the merciless steel of his ears and his nose they deprived him ;  
Then they extracted and threw as a feast to the dogs his intestines ;  
Lastly they hacked off both of his hands and his feet in their fury.

Now when the blood from their hands and their feet they had washed, to Odysseus  
Into the house they returned; and the whole of the deed was accomplished.

Then to the dear nurse Eurycleia he called, and addressed her :

“Nurse, bring sulphur ! It cleanseth pollution. And bring me a brazier,  
So that I sweeten the hall with the fumes. Then go to thy mistress ;  
Bid her to come to my presence with all of her maiden attendants ;  
Summon moreover the rest of the women that serve in the palace.”

Him then in turn gave answer the dear nurse Eurycleia :

“Yea of a surety, my child, thou hast spoken according to reason.

Still, come now, I will fetch thee a mantle and tunic for raiment.

Thus, with thy great wide shoulders enveloped in beggarly tatters,  
Stand not here in the hall. ’Twere verily blameful to do so.”

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :

“Firstly I wish in the hall for a brazier of coals to be brought me.”

Thus did he speak, and the dear nurse Eurycleia, obeying,

Brought to her master the sulphur and brazier of coal, and Odysseus

Thoroughly sweetened with fumes of the sulphur the house and the courtyard.

Then did the old dame go through all of the beautiful mansion

Taking the news to the women and bidding them hasten their coming.

So with a torch in the hand these came from the inner apartments.

Flocking around him they greeted Odysseus with joy and embraced him,

Lovingly kissing his head and his shoulders in token of welcome,

Grasping and kissing his hands. And a rapture sweet overcame him,

Even a longing for wailing and tears as he saw them and knew them.



## ODYSSEY BOOK XXIII

**L**AUGHING for joy now hurried the nurse to the upper apartment,  
Bringing her lady the news that Odysseus was there in his homestead.  
Onward with tottering knees and with feet unsteady she stumbled,  
Till, at the head of the sleeper arriving, she called to her mistress :  
“Wake, my belov’d ! wake, Penelopeia my child ! Thou shalt see now,  
Yea with thine eyes thou shalt see, what every day thou hast longed for.  
Come is Odysseus !—is here in his home, whence long he was vanished !  
Slain are all of the arrogant suitors who troubled his homestead,  
Wasting the wealth of the house and treating his son with oppression.”

Her forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :

“Nay, dear mother, the gods have driven thee mad ! An immortal  
Ofttimes maketh a fool of the wise—yea, even the wisest—  
Ay and the one that is foolish he guides in the path of discretion.  
Surely a god hath unbalanced thy mind that was steady aforetime.  
Why dost thou mock me and add to the grief that is heavy within me,  
Chattering thus so wildly and waking me out of my slumber  
While so softly imprisoned it held me and shaded mine eyelids ?  
Never I slept thus sound from the day that Odysseus departed  
Sailing for Ilion, city of doom, name ne’er to be mentioned.  
Go now, get thee away and return to the women’s apartment !  
Verily were it another of all of the maids that attend me,  
Bringing reports like these and waking me out of my slumber,  
Rudely enough I had sent her away and had bid her betake her  
Back to her chamber—but thou . . ! it is only thy age that protects thee.”  
Then once more made answer the dear nurse Eurycleia :

“Nay, I am mocking thee not, dear child ! I assure thee in earnest  
Come is Odysseus and here is arrived at his home, as I told thee.  
He was the stranger—the guest whom all at the banquet insulted.  
Telemachus long since was aware that his father was present,  
Yet with a manly discretion the plans of his sire he revealed not,  
Waiting for vengeance to fall on the heads of the arrogant suitors.”

Thus as the old nurse spake, in her gladness Penelopeia  
Sprang from her couch and embraced her, and tears fell fast from her eyelids ;  
Then she uplifted her voice and with swift-winged words she addressed her :  
“Come, dear mother, I beg thee to tell me and give me assurance,  
Should he in sooth be arrived and be here in his home as thou sayest,

*Odyssey* How was he able to lay strong hands on the insolent suitors,  
XXIII Being alone, while ever they keep right many together?"  
87-92 Then once more made answer the dear nurse Eurycleia:  
"Nothing I saw—knew nothing—and nothing I heard but a groaning  
Made by the dying. We sat in the strong-built room in a corner  
Frozen with fear, and the door close-fitting was shut of the chamber,  
Till that I heard one calling me forth from the women's apartment,  
Even thy son, prince Telemachus—for his father had sent him.  
So to Odysseus I came, and I found him amidst of the slaughtered  
Standing; and round him was covered the hard-stamped floor with the corpses  
Lying the one on the other. I ween that thy soul had exulted  
Hadst thou beheld him besmeared with the filth and the gore as a lion.  
Now they're lying together, anigh to the gate of the courtyard,  
All in a heap, and the master is fuming the palace with sulphur,  
Setting aflame great braziers of coal; and he sent me to call thee.  
Follow me now, that ye both in a heaven of happiness enter,  
Where your hearts shall rejoice, forgetting their former afflictions.  
Now is accomplished the thing that for long long years thou hast hoped for:  
Lo, he is come—he is here—he is safe in his home—and has found thee  
Safe in his halls, and his son; while those who had wickedly wronged him,  
Even the suitors . . . he wreaked his revenge on them all in his palace."

Her then in answer addressed these words wise Penelopeia:  
"Nay, dear mother, refrain thee at present from vaunting and laughter!  
Well dost thou know how welcome he were to the whole of his household,  
All of us, chiefly indeed to myself and the son that I bare him.  
Yet—it is never and never the truth, this tale that thou tellest.  
Nay, 'twas a god immortal that slaughtered the high-born suitors,  
Wroth at their grievous and insolent pride and their infamous actions,  
Seeing they treated alike all earth-born men with dishonour,  
Good no less than the bad—yea every one who approached them;  
So for their folly and madness they suffered. But dead is Odysseus;  
Lost was his way to the land of Achaea, and lost was his life too."  
Then did the dear old nurse make answer and thus she addressed her:  
"Nay but, my child, what word from the door of thy lips hath escaped thee,  
While thou affirmst that thy lord, who is here at the hearth of his homestead,  
Ne'er shall return! Ay, truly, thy heart was incredulous alway!  
Well, I will tell thee besides of a proof infallibly certain,  
Even the wound which once by a boar's white tusk was inflicted.  
This as I bathed him I spied—and I eagerly turned me towards thee  
Wishing to speak; but he, laying his hand on my mouth to prevent it,



Would not permit me to utter a word, in his wisdom and foresight.  
Nay, come, follow me now ! I will venture my life on my tidings.  
Should I deceive thee at all, by a death most pitiful slay me !”

*Odyssey*

*XXXI*

*17-118*

Her once more gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“ Ah, dear mother, 'tis hard, how great soever thy wisdom,  
Over the plans and the counsels to watch of the gods everlasting.  
Well then, now let us go to my son. I am fain to behold them,  
These dead men, these suitors—and him moreover that slew them.”

Then from her room she descended, and deeply she pondered in spirit  
Whether to hold her aloof from her lord and to test him with questions  
Or to approach and embrace him and kiss him on hands and on forehead.  
So, when at length she had entered the hall and had stepped from the door-stone,  
Fronting Odysseus she seated herself, in the light of a brazier,  
Close to the opposite wall ; and with eyes cast down he was sitting  
Nigh to a pillar that rose to the roof ; and he waited expectant,  
Hoping his beautiful wife would speak when she saw him before her.  
Long while silent she sat, with her spirit amazed and bewildered ;  
Now with her eyes fixed full on his face she was earnestly gazing,  
Now she was doubting, beholding him clad in a beggarly raiment.

Then spake Telemachus and with words of reproach he addressed her :  
“ Mother—and yet no mother of mine, for thy heart is unloving—  
Wherefore now dost thou hold thee aloof from my father, nor gladly  
Seat thee beside him and bid him to speak and to answer thy questions ?  
Ne'er was a wife like thee, with a heart thus hardened within her,  
So as to turn from a husband who after unnumber'd afflictions  
Came in the twentieth year to his home and the land of his fathers.  
Thus it was ever . . for harder than stone is the heart in thy bosom !”  
Him then in answer addressed these words wise Penelopeia :  
“ Nay but, my child, have patience—for dead is the spirit within me ;  
Neither to utter a word am I able, nor ask him a question,  
Nay, nor to look in his face. If in truth it is he, as thou sayest,  
Even Odysseus returned to his home, we can verily better  
Learn it than thus, and be surer the one of the other ; for we twain  
Tokens possess that we kept to ourselves and hidden from others.”

Hearing her words with a smile, long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Suddenly turned to his son, and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“ Telemachus, now leave us alone in the hall, that thy mother

Test me ; for thus she will soon be aware of the truth and confess it.  
Now I am covered with filth and am clothed in a beggarly raiment,  
So with dishonour she treats me and says I am never thy father.  
Meanwhile, come, let us think how best we shall act in the future.  
He that hath happened to slay one person alone in a people,  
One who was able to leave not many behind to avenge him,  
Flieth from kith and from kin and from native land as an exile ;  
We . . 'twas the stay of the city we slew . . 'twas the best of the princes  
Here in the Ithacan land. It is this that I bid thee consider.”  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
“ See to the matter thyself, dear father ; for thine is the wisdom  
Said to be greatest on earth, and with thee in the giving of counsel  
None might hope to compete—no other of men that be mortal.  
All of us others will eagerly follow thee. Ne’er shalt thou find us  
Lacking in will to support thee, if only the power is present.”  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Well now, come, I will tell thee the plan that I hold to be wisest.  
First then, all of you cleanse you with water and clothe you in doublets,  
Also the maidens command to array them in festal apparel.  
Then let the godlike bard with his lute’s loud-echoing music  
Give us the lead for the dance in a mirthful melodious measure,  
So that it sound as a wedding to those outside of the palace,  
Whether to folk that shall pass on the road, or to neighbours around us.  
Thus no word shall be bruited abroad in the town that the suitors  
Lie here slaughtered before we shall get us away to the country  
Unto the farm in the midst of the forest ; and there we can counsel  
How to avail us of luck, if the Father Olympian grant it.”

Thus did he speak, and they listened attent to his words and obeyed them.  
Firstly they bathed them in water and cast fresh tunics around them ;  
Also the women did on their attire ; and the godlike minstrel,  
Taking his hollow harp, in the depths of their bosoms excited  
Yearning for sweet-voiced song and the peerless pleasure of dancing.  
Then to the sound of their feet did the spacious mansion reëcho,  
While that the fair-zoned maidens and men were making them merry ;  
Hearing the which spake many a one outside of the palace :  
“ Sure, she is married at last, our lady of many a wooer !  
Pitiful creature, unable to wait for the love of her girlhood,  
Faithfully keeping on guard at his palace until he arrived here !”  
Thus spake many a one ; but they knew not how it had happened.

Now great-hearted Odysseus was back in his home, and the house-dame Eurynomé brought water to bathe him and oil to anoint him, Also apparel to clothe him withal, both mantle and tunic. Over him then great beauty was shed by the goddess Athene : Taller and stronger she made him in aspect, and down from his head fell Clustering thickly the locks of his hair as the flower hyacinthine. Even as gold o'er silver is poured by an artist—a craftsman Taught in his art by the god Hephaestus and Pallas Athene Manifold skill, and of beauty is every work that he fashions, Thus did she pour forth grace on the shoulders and head of Odysseus ; So as he stept from the bath he was like an immortal in semblance. Then he resealed himself on the chair from the which he had risen, Placing himself in the front of his wife ; and he spake to her, saying : “ Nay, good lady, a heart more hard, more cruel, than thine is Never a woman received from the gods who inhabit Olympus ; Ne'er was a wife like thee, with a heart thus hardened within her, So as to turn from a husband who after unnumber'd afflictions Came in the twentieth year to his home and the land of his fathers. Nurse, go strew me my bed ! I will sleep by myself ; I will forthwith Lay me to rest—for the heart in her bosom is surely of iron.”

Him then in answer addressed these words wise Penelopeia : “ Nay, good man, it is neither because I am proud or disdainful, Nor am I dazed. Right well I recall thee (if thou be Odysseus) Such as thou wert when from here in a long-oared vessel thou sailedst. Go now, Eurycleia, and strew him the strong-made bedstead Here outside of the room that he built for himself as his chamber. Bring ye the bedstead forth ; then lay soft bedding upon it ; Cover it over with fleeces and wrappers and glistening blankets.”

Thus did she speak as a test for her husband ; and much was Odysseus Angered thereat, and he turned to his own true wife and addressed her : “ Verily, wife, this word thou hast spoken is grievously cruel. Who hath removed it—the bed that I built ? ’Twere difficult truly E'en for a man right skilful, unless some deity helped him. Though for a god ’twere easy to move it wherever he listed, Never a mortal that liveth, not e'en in the prime of his manhood, Out of its place could heave it with handspikes. Great is the secret Touching that fine-wrought bed—for I made it myself and in private. Once was a long-leaved olive that stood inside the enclosure, Thriving and grown to the full ; and its stem was as thick as a pillar.

*Odyssey* Round it I built me a chamber and laboured until it was finished,  
*XXXI* Making a structure of stones close-set; and I carefully roofed it;  
*192 - 199* Also I gave it a door well-fitting and firmly compacted.  
Next from the long-leaved olive I lopped off all of the brushwood,  
Whittled the bark of the stump right down to the root, and I planed it  
Evenly, cutting it straight to the line with the skill of a master.  
Then with an auger I bored it and fashioned it into a bed-post.  
Thus I began, and I wrought me the bed, and, until it was finished,  
Carved it, and richly with ivory, silver, and gold I adorned it.  
Then to the frame hide thongs I attached bright-coloured with purple.  
There now! Such is the secret I tell thee as token. I know not  
Whether my bed stands still as it stood, O wife, or if long since  
Some man moved it away, with the trunk cut off at the bottom."

Thus as he spake were loosened her knees and the heart in her bosom,  
Since to herself she confessed that the token was sure that he gave her.  
Bursting in tears, straightway to Odysseus she ran and embraced him,  
Casting her arms on his neck and kissing his head and exclaiming:  
"Gaze not upon me in anger, Odysseus! In all thou hast shown thee  
Wisest of men—and thou knowst that the gods have sent us affliction,  
Jealous to see us abiding in happiness one with the other,  
Joying in youth and hoping to reach eld's threshold together.  
Wherefore now I beseech thee to feel not wroth and indignant  
Only because, when I saw thee at first, not thus I embraced thee.  
Ever and ever again hath my heart in the depths of my bosom  
Shuddered with fear lest any with tales might haply deceive me,  
One of the many that come with an evil and gainful intention.  
Nay, e'en Argive Helen, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty,  
Ne'er to a stranger had given her love and her tender embraces  
Had she but known that again by the warlike sons of Achaea  
Back to her home she was doomed to be brought and the land of her fathers.  
True, to committing the shameless deed some deity urged her;  
True, she had never foreseen in her spirit the end of her folly,  
End so fearful . . . that first on ourselves brought mourning and sorrow.  
Now . . . I believe! for thou giv'st me a token unerring—the secret  
Touching the bed—our bed—that was ne'er by a mortal beholden  
Saying by thee and by me, and by one of my women attendants,  
Actoris—one that my sire, when I came as a bride to thy palace,  
Gave me—and ever the door of thy strong-built chamber she guarded.  
Yea, I believe! thou hast conquered my heart, however unloving!"



THE RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY HIS WIFE.



Thus as she spake still more she excited his yearning for wailing.  
Clasping his true sweet wife to his bosom he wept as he held her.  
Welcome as sight of the land, when at last it appeareth to swimmers  
Whose good ship, o'erwhelmed in the midst of the sea by Poseidon,  
Drifts as a wreck and is tossed by the wind and the mountainous billows,  
While some few, in the hope to escape from the grey salt water,  
Swim for the land, and with brine are thickly encrusted their bodies,  
Then on the shore right gladly they step, and they find them in safety,  
Thus, when she saw him, she welcomed with gladness Odysseus her husband,  
Nor from his neck for a moment her fair white arms did she loosen.  
Yea, on their weeping had risen the morning, the roseate-fingered,  
Save for the friendly device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
Night in her outmost realm she delayed long-lingering ; held back  
Morning the golden-enthron'd at the stream of the Ocean, and bade her  
Yoke not her swift-paced horses, the bringers to mortals of daylight,  
Lampus and Phæthon, chariot-steeds of the goddess of morning.

Then at the last spake thus to his wife deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Not at the end, O wife, do I deem us of every labour.  
Much is remaining of toil, yea, measureless travail, and hardships  
Many and great—all which I am destined to do and to suffer,  
E'en as foretold me the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,  
Yea, on the day I descended and entered the mansion of Hades,  
Seeking to hear of a way of return for myself and my comrades.  
Now come, wife, let us lay us abed—'tis the season already  
There to repose us and seek the delicious enjoyment of slumber.”  
Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“ Yea, most surely thy bed shall be ready whenever thy spirit  
Longeth to rest, for at last by the will and the favour of heaven  
Here to thy well-built home thou art come and the land of thy fathers.  
Still—as thou spakest thereof and a deity stirr'd thy remembrance—  
'Tell me, I pray, of the travail to come ; for I ween I shall learn it  
Later, and knowing it now were sure no greater misfortune.”

Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“ Nay, good lady, but why thus all impatiently urge me,  
Bidding me speak ? Well, come, I will tell thee, nor try to conceal it.  
Verily little thy soul will rejoice ; yea also myself too  
Little am joyed, for to many a city of mortals he bade me  
Wander again from my home, with a well-shaped oar on my shoulder,  
Till to a people I come which never hath heard of the ocean,



Yea to a people that mix no salt with the food that they live on ;  
Neither hath any a ship, with the cheeks red-painted, beholden,  
Neither hath knowledge of oars which serve as the wings of a vessel.  
Also he gave me a sign most certain—the which I will tell thee.  
Whosoever it haps that a chance wayfarer that meets me  
Saith 'tis a winnowing fan that I bear on my glistening shoulder,  
Fixing the oar in the ground I shall leave it—for thus he commanded.  
Then to Poseidon the king I shall offer a goodly oblation,  
Even a male of the swine and a male of the herd and the sheepfold,  
Then turn homeward again, and many an offering holy  
Slay to the deathless gods who inhabit the infinite heaven,  
Each one after the other. At last shall a death from the ocean,  
Such as of deaths is the mildest, befall me and gently remove me,  
Weary and worn, in a smooth old age ; and around me my people  
Happy shall live. All this he foretold would have a fulfilment.”  
Him forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia :  
“ Should but the gods vouchsafe to thy life such happier ending,  
Surely they grant thee a hope to escape at the last from affliction.”

Thus in the hall these twain held converse one with the other.  
Meantime Eurynomé and the nurse made ready the bedstead,  
Laying thereon soft wraps, by the light of the radiant torches.  
Then, when the strong-built bed was prepared and the labour was ended,  
Back to her room went Eurycleia to lay her to slumber,  
While that the other, the maiden attendant who guarded the chamber,  
Guided the way for her lord and her mistress, holding a pine-torch ;  
Unto the chamber she led them and then she returned ; and with gladness  
These two came once more to the rites of the bed as aforetime.

Soon now Telemachus and the cowherd and also the swineherd  
Stayed their feet from the dance, and bidding the women to cease too  
Laid them to rest for the night in the shadowy hall of the palace.

Now when the twain had delighted in love and its tender endearments,  
Then to the pleasure of talking they turned, and all they recounted.  
First by the fairest of women was told what woes she had suffered,  
Forced to behold in the palace the ruinous horde of the suitors  
Coming to woo her and slaying the fat-fed sheep and the oxen,  
Many and many a head, and emptying many a wine-cask.  
Next did Odysseus descended from Zeus tell all of the sorrows  
Brought on his foes, and how he had toiled and had suffered afflictions—

All he related ; and hearing it greatly she joyed, nor did slumber  
Fall on her eyelids before he had finished the whole of the story.  
Firstly he told how landing he sacked the Ciconian city,  
Then to the rich-soiled land of the Eaters of Lotus was wafted.  
Next of the deeds of the Cyclops he spake, and how he avenged him,  
Blinding the pitiless monster for eating his valiant comrades.  
Then how Aeolus' island he reached, and was kindly entreated,  
Yea and was helped to return to his well-loved home, but to reach it  
Yet was forbidden by Fate, and suddenly seized by a tempest,  
Grievously groaning, again he was borne to the home of the fishes.  
Then how Telepylus of the Laestrygonian people  
Next he had reached—where perished his well-greaved mates and his vessels,  
One of them only escaping, the black-hulled ship of Odysseus.  
Also he told of the infinite guile and the magic of Circe.  
Then how, seeking to visit the mouldering mansion of Hades,  
There to consult with the spirit of Teiresias the diviner,  
Over the ocean he sailed in his well-manned ship, and beheld there  
All of his comrades of old, and the mother that bore him and reared him.  
Then how maddened he listed the sweet-voiced song of the Sirens ;  
Then of the Wandering Rocks he related and dreadful Charybdis,  
Yea and of Scylla, from whom unscathed none ever escapeth.  
Then how, after the kine of the Sun were slain by his comrades,  
Struck by the sulphurous bolt of the Father who speaketh in thunder  
Perished his swift-winged ship and perished his trusty companions,  
All of them—all but himself ; and alone he escaped from destruction.  
Then to the isle Ogygian come and the goddess Calypso,  
How he was held by the nymph, in her yearning to make him her husband,  
Long in her hollow caves ; and she cherished him kindly and promised  
Even to make him immortal and ageless for ever and ever ;  
Still did she never persuade him nor soften the heart in his bosom.  
Then to the folk Phaeacian come through many a peril,  
How he was kindly received and was honoured like an immortal,  
Yea and was sent on a ship to the well-loved land of his fathers  
Laden with many a treasure of bronze and of gold and of raiment.  
This was the last he related before sweet slumber o'ercame him,  
Slumber that loosens the limbs and loosens the cares of the spirit.

Then by the friendly device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene  
(After she knew it for sure in the depths of her heart that Odysseus  
Now had delighted in love and in sleep to his soul's satisfaction)  
Out of the Ocean the early-arising, the golden-enthronéd

Goddess appeared who bringeth to mortals the day ; and the hero  
Rose from his soft-strewn bed, and he spake to his wife and enjoined her :  
“Truly enough in the past, O wife, did we suffer affliction,  
Both of us—thou with thy sorrow unending because I returned not  
Weeping at home, while Zeus and the other immortals had bound me  
Fast in misfortune, despite of my longings, afar from my homeland.  
Now, since heaven hath brought us again to the raptures of wedlock,  
See thou attend as of old to the wealth we possess in the palace ;  
While, for the sheep and the cattle consumed by the arrogant suitors,  
Many another as spoil I shall capture, and others the chieftains  
Freely will give, till full once more are all of my farmyards.  
Natheless, now I shall go to my farm in the midst of the forest.  
There I shall visit my dear good father, who endlessly mourns me.  
Touching thyself . . thou art prudent and wise . . but I tell thee my wishes :  
Swiftly will spread a report, so soon as the sun is arisen,  
Telling the fate of the men—these suitors I slew in the palace.  
Wherefore unto thy chamber ascend with thy maiden attendants.  
There keep seated, nor show thee to any that pass, and address none.”

Thus as he spake on his shoulders he buckled his beautiful armour.  
Then he awakened his son and the cowherd and also the swineherd,  
Bidding them each lay hand on a weapon of war to defend them.  
Nor did they fail to obey, and they fully equipped them in harness.  
Then they unbolted a door and they ventured them forth, and Odysseus  
Led them. Already was light on the earth, but the goddess Athene  
Hid them in night, and she swiftly conducted them out of the city.

# ODYSSEY BOOK XXIV

**N**OW were summoned the souls of the dead by Cyllenian Hermes,  
Even the souls of the suitors. A rod in his hand he was holding,  
Beautiful, golden, with which men's eyes he entranceth to slumber  
Just as he wills, while others again from their sleep he awaketh.  
Touched by the wand they awoke & obeyed him, & followed him squealing.  
Even as bats in the dark mysterious depths of a cavern  
Squeal as they flutter around, should one from the cluster be fallen  
Where from the rock suspended they hung all clinging together,  
So did the souls flock squealing behind him as Hermes the Helper  
Guided them down to the gloom through dank and mouldering pathways.  
Passing the Ocean's stream and the White Rock's glittering portal,  
Passing the gates of the Sun and the shadowy regions of Dreamland,  
Soon at the world of the dead they arrived and the asphodel meadow,  
Where dwell spirits—the phantoms of those whose labour is ended.

Here they encountered the soul of the great Pelean Achilles,  
Yea and the souls of Patroclus and Antilochus the unrivalled,  
Ajax too, who excelled all others in form and in favour,  
All of the Dánaan chiefs save only the peerless Achilles.

Now these souls had assembled around him when slowly approaching,  
Lo, drew nigh them the spirit of King Agamemnon Atrides  
Sorrowing. Round him was gathered a throng of the others who likewise  
Met with their destined doom and died in the house of Agisthus.

First brake silence the soul of the great Pelean Achilles :  
“Verily, Atreus' son, of the heroes ever we deemed thee  
Dearest by far to the Father of heaven who joyeth in thunder,  
Seeing he set thee as lord o'er warriors many and mighty  
There in the Trojans' land, where suffered the sons of Achaea.  
Ah but, alas, thee too full early was fated to visit  
Death's dark doom, which none that is born on the earth can escape from.  
Would to the gods on the day of thy honour and glory and lordship  
There in the land of the Trojans the night of thy death had arisen!  
Then had the hosts of Achaea erected a tomb to thy honour;  
Yea and besides for thy son thou hadst left great glory behind thee.  
Ah but thy fate by a death most pitiful doomed thee to perish.”

Then gave answer the spirit of King Agamemnon Atrides :

“Happy art thou, O peer of the gods, Pelean Achilles,  
Slain—not at Argos, but far from thy home in the Troad; and round thee  
Many another, the best of the Trojans and sons of Achaea,  
Died as they fought for thy body; and under the eddying dust-cloud  
Mighty and mightily fallen thou layst, of thy prowess forgetful.  
All day long we had fought, nor ever at all had the combat  
Ceased, but a tempest was sent by the god of the thunder and stayed us.  
Then, when at last to the ships we had borne thee away from the battle,  
Laying thee down in a bed, on thy beautiful body, to cleanse it,  
Soft warm water we poured, and we salved it with oil, and around thee  
Bitterly weeping and shearing their locks were standing the Grecians.  
Suddenly then from the sea with her nymphs immortal thy mother  
Rose—for the tidings had reached her; and over the ocean a wondrous  
Wailing was heard, and a tremor of fear seized all the Achaeans;  
Yea, they had hasted away to the hollow ships and departed  
Save for a man deep-versed in the wisdom of yore who restrained them,  
Nestor, whose was the counsel that oft proved wisest aforetime.  
Now with a kindly intent he addressed them and spake to them saying :  
‘Argives, stay! I beseech you to fly not, princely Achaeans!  
Lo, from the depths of the sea with her nymphs immortal his mother  
Cometh to look on the face of her son who is dead, and to mourn him.’  
So was the panic allayed of the high-souled sons of Achaea.  
Then stood Nereus’ daughters, the ancient god of the ocean,  
Round thee, and bitterly wailing in raiment ambrosial wrapped thee.  
Also the Muses, the Nine, made answer the one to the other,  
Chanting with beautiful voices the dirge, while none of the Argives  
Tearless remained, so mightily moved them the song of the Muses.  
Seven and ten long nights, and by day, we incessantly mourned thee  
Wailing and weeping—immortals together with men that be mortal.  
Then on the eighteenth day to the flames thou wast given, and round thee  
Fatlings many of sheep and of crook-horned cattle we slaughtered.  
So thou wast burnt in the raiment divine and in many an unguent,  
Yea and in honey; and many a warrior prince of Achaea  
Marching in armour encircled the pyre as thy body was burning,  
Fighters on foot and on cars, and great was the din and the clangour.  
Now when thy body at last was consumed in the flame of Hephaestus,  
Early the morrow thy bones’ white ashes we gathered, Achilles.  
These in unwatered wine and in unguent we laid; and thy mother  
Brought us an urn twy-handled and golden, that god Dionysus  
Gave her—the work, as she said, of the far-famed craftsman Hephaestus.

Here lie buried thy bones' white ashes, renowned Achilles,  
Mingled with those of thy friend who had perished before thee, Patroclus;  
Here, but apart, lie ashes of Antilochus, whom thou lovedst  
More than the rest of thy mates, save only the fallen Patroclus.  
Over them all we erected a monument mighty and splendid,  
Piled by the infinite host of the Argive army of spearmen  
High on a foreland that jutteth above broad Hellespontus,  
So as afar from the sea to be visible ever to mortals,  
Those now living as well as the men of the age that is coming.  
Then did thy mother entreat from the gods magnificent prizes.  
These in the place of the contests she set for the princely Achaeans.  
Oft wast thou present, I ween, at the funeral rites of a hero,  
Often hast seen, if perchance some prince of the people hath perished,  
Young men girding their loins and preparing themselves for the contest;  
Yet had exceeding astonishment seized thee beholding the prizes,  
All those exquisite gifts in thy honour bestowed by the goddess  
Thetis of silvern foot—so dearly the deities loved thee.  
Thus not even in death hast thou lost thy renown, and for ever  
Unto the ends of the earth shall be honoured the name of Achilles,  
While—what profits it me that I wound to an ending the warfare?  
Home I returned, but was whelmed in a pitiful death by the Father  
Under the hands of that woman accursed, my wife, and Aegisthus."

Thus these warrior souls held converse one with the other.  
Then drew nigh Hermeias the Messenger, Slayer of Argus,  
Guiding to Hades the ghosts of the suitors Odysseus had smitten.  
Marvelling much at the sight, those twain came forward to meet them,  
Till was perceived by the soul of Atrides, King Agamemnon,  
Amphimedon the renown'd, dear son of the Ithacan chieftain  
Prince Melaneus, who of yore was the friend and the host of Atrides.

Then brake silence the soul of the hero King Agamemnon:  
"Amphimedon, what bringeth you down to the nethermost darkness,  
All picked men, all equal in age? It is verily this wise  
One might choose and collect in a city the prime of the manhood.  
Whether did thee and thy ships o'erwhelm earth-shaking Poseidon,  
Sending an adverse blast and the mountainous billows against you,  
Or was it hostile men that on dry land wrought your destruction,  
While that ye drave from the pasture the fair-fleeced sheep and the oxen,  
Or as around some city ye fought for the spoil and the women?  
Answer me all that I ask, for thy guest-friend, lo, I avow me.



*Odysseus* Hast thou forgotten that thither I came to the home of thy fathers  
881 Once with the prince Menelaus, to visit Odysseus and urge him  
113/114 Unto the Ilian city with well-decked vessels to follow?  
Gone was the whole of a month when the sea's wide gulf we retraversed,  
Since it was hard to persuade him, Odysseus the sacker of cities."

Then did the spirit of Amphimedon thus answer him, saying :  
"Glorious monarch of men, O King Agamemnon Atrides,  
Yea, I remember it all, Zeus-foster'd prince, as thou sayest ;  
Wherefore in turn will I tell thee of all, and will truly relate it,  
Touching the pitiful death that we died and how it was compassed.  
Know that we sued for the wife of Odysseus, who long was unheard of.  
She would neither reject our hated proposals nor end them,  
Since she had plotted to bring on us all death's terrible darkness ;  
Yea and besides in her heart this crafty device she invented :  
Raising a spacious loom in the hall, she betook her to weaving,  
Working a broad and a delicate web ; and anon she addressed us :  
'Princes who sue for my hand—since dead is the godlike Odysseus—  
Patiently wait, though eager to hasten my marriage, till fully  
Woven this web, lest vainly I forfeit the fruits of my spinning.  
Lo, 'tis a shroud for the noble Laertes, to wrap him, whenever  
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him ;  
Else in Achaea's land might well some woman reproach me  
Were he to lie, who possessed such riches, in want of a grave-cloth.'  
So did she speak, and within us the valiant heart was persuaded.  
Thus then all of the day at the spacious loom she was weaving ;  
During the night she unravelled the web with her torches beside her.  
Three long years with her secret device she befooled the Achaeans,  
Till, when the fourth year came, and as season was followed by season,  
After the waning of months, and when many a day was accomplished,  
Then at the last (since one of her women who knew it had told us)  
While at the loom her magnificent web she unravelled we caught her.  
So she was forced, though sorely unwilling, to finish her labour.  
Now when the cloth she had shown us—the great broad web she had woven—  
Washen anew and as bright as the moon or the sun in his glory,  
Straight did Odysseus arrive—by the malice of heaven from somewhere  
Brought to the farm at the end of the isle where dwelleth the swineherd.  
Also the well-loved son of the noble Odysseus arrived there,  
Newly returned with his black-hulled vessel from Pylos the sandy.  
These twain plotted between them a pitiful death for the suitors.  
Then to the far-famed town they descended—Odysseus was later



Thither arriving than Telemachus, who had started before him.  
Led by the swineherd, Odysseus appeared, in a beggarly raiment,  
Under the form of a vagrant, a man right wretched and aged,  
Staying his steps with a staff and invested in sorry apparel ;  
Nor could any among us suspect that the man was Odysseus  
Suddenly thus reappearing—not even the elder amongst us.  
So we attacked him with insults and even assailed him with missiles.  
Long while thus in the hall of his palace he suffered in silence,  
Quietly bearing the blows and abuse with a heart of endurance,  
Till he was roused by the will of the Father who beareth the aegis ;  
Then, with the help of his son collecting the beautiful weapons,  
Out of the hall to a chamber he bore them, and bolted the portals.  
Also with crafty intent he had counselled his wife and had bid her  
Offer his bow to the suitors and cold grey axes of iron,  
Dooming us so to a trial that proved the beginning of slaughter.  
None were able to master the might of the bow, and we could not  
String it ; the strength for the feat was in all of us utterly wanting.  
Now when the weapon was just to be placed in the hands of Odysseus,  
All of us raising together a din and a clamour forbade them  
Give him the bow, how strongly soever he spake to demand it ;  
Telemachus was alone in his favour and spake with insistence.  
So he was given the bow, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
Lightly he strung it and pierced with an arrow the axes, and leaping  
On to the threshold he stood, with the swift shafts poured from the quiver,  
Terribly peering around—then smote prince Antinous dead ;  
Then at the others he loosened his arrows, the bringers of anguish,  
Aiming unerringly. Thickly they fell, one over the other.  
Then was it clearly perceived an immortal was present to help them,  
Since all over the hall of the palace they chased us in fury,  
Smiting around them to left and to right ; and a horrible groaning  
Rose midst lopping of heads, and the floor ran red with the life-blood.  
Thus, O King Agamemnon, we perished, and e'en to the present  
Lie our bodies uncared for anigh to the halls of Odysseus,  
Seeing the friends and the kindred of none know aught that is happened,  
Else they had come, and, washing the black blood out of the gashes,  
Laid us on biers and bewailed—as is due to a man when he dieth.”

Then gave answer the spirit of King Agamemnon Atrides :  
“ Happy art thou, Laertes' son, deep-plotting Odysseus !  
Truly a wife thou wast granted to win surpassing in virtue !  
Such was the excellent wisdom of peerless Penelopeia,

*Odyssey* Daughter of Icarius! So true she remained to Odysseus,  
*XIII* True to the love of her youth, that the story shall ne'er be forgotten,  
*191-197* How she was wise and was good; and for earth-born men shall immortals  
Fashion the exquisite song of the true-souled Penelopeia;  
Not as the daughter of Tyndareüs, who iniquity plotted,  
Even the death of her lord and her husband. The song shall be hateful  
Telling her story on earth, for on every woman for ever  
Evil repute she hath brought, yea even on her that is upright."

Thus these souls of the dead held converse one with another  
Down in the depths of the earth, in the mouldering mansion of Hades.

Now those others had got from the city and down to a farm-land  
Beautiful, carefully tilled. 'Twas a farm that belonged to Laertes,  
Even the farm he had won as the meed of his manifold labours.  
Here was his home, and on all sides running around was an outhouse;  
This was the barrack allotted for meals, and for sitting and sleeping,  
Unto the bondsmen who worked on the fields as he willed to command them.  
Serving within was an agéd Sicilian woman, who duly  
Tended the poor old man on the farm-land far from the city.  
Here when they came, to his son and his servants Odysseus addressed him:  
"Go to the well-built house of the steading and enter within it.  
Slaughter a pig for the dinner, the best ye can find in the farmstead,  
While I shall go and shall look for my father Laertes and test him  
Whether he knows me again and recalls me as soon as he sees me,  
Or if he fails to remember because of the years of my absence."

These words spoken, his weapons of war to the servants he handed.  
Quickly they went to the house of the farm; but Odysseus betook him  
Unto the rich-stocked orchard, to seek for his father and test him.  
Here when he entered and wandered amidst long rows of the fruit-trees  
Neither was Dolius seen nor his sons nor a thrall; they had gone thence  
Gathering stones to be used for the wall of the garden enclosure;  
All had departed—the old man leading the way for the others.  
So he discovered his father alone in the garden of fruit-trees  
Spading the soil for a plant, in a doublet unseemly and filthy,  
Ragged and patched, and with leggings of oxhide tattered and mended  
Strapped to the calves of his legs, to afford a protection from scratches;  
Gloves too over his hands to defend them from thorns and a goatskin  
Cap on his head he was wearing—and thus he was nursing his sorrows.  
Now when his son, long-suffering godlike Odysseus, perceived him

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Wasted by age and by care, with a heart sore stricken or sorrow,  
Dropping a tear he remained in the shade of a high-branched pear-tree  
Gazing and striving with doubt in the depths of his mind and his spirit  
Whether to fall on the neck of his father and kiss him, and tell him  
All that had happened, and how he was come back safe to the homeland,  
Or at the first to address him a question and thoroughly test him.  
Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the wiser,  
First to accost him with words unkindly, in order to test him.  
Purposing thus in his mind, came up to him godlike Odysseus,  
While with his head low-bent he was spading the soil for the sapling.

Then spake thus the illustrious son as he stood by his father :  
“Gaffer, thou seemest to lack no knowledge in tending an orchard.  
Verily well it is kept by thy care ; there’s nothing within it,  
Whether a sapling, a fig or a vine, or an olive or pear-tree,  
Ay or a plot in the garden, that shows not the care of thy tendance.  
Still, one thing will I say—let it stir no wrath in thy spirit :  
No good care on thyself is bestowed. Thou art aged and also  
Wretchedly withered and worn and clad in a shameful apparel.  
Sure it is not for neglecting thy work that thy master neglects thee.  
Nay and in truth there’s nought of a slave to be seen in thy person,  
Either in stature or face—Thou art like to a man that is kingly,  
Even to one who is wont, when enough he hath bathed and hath eaten,  
Softly to sleep, as is meet and is right for a man that is elder.  
Come now, answer me this that I ask thee and clearly explain it :  
Who is thy master ? For whom art thou working and tending this orchard ?  
Tell me moreover exactly, that so I shall learn it for certain,  
Whether I truly am here in the Ithacan island, as some one  
Just now meeting me yonder, as here I was coming, informed me.  
Rather a fool he appeared, and he seemed scarce willing to tell me  
All that I wished, nor to listen at all to my words when I asked him  
Touching a friend of my own, if he still was alive and existing,  
Or if perchance he had died and had gone to the mansion of Hades.  
Yea I will tell thee thereof. Do thou carefully listen and mark me.  
Once I befriended a man in the well-loved land of my fathers,  
One who had chanced to arrive at my house ; and ne’er was a mortal  
More to be loved who has come from afar as a guest to my homestead.  
Ithaca—so he avowed—was the land of his birth ; and he also  
Named me a certain Laertes, Arceisius’ son, as his father.  
So I invited him unto my halls and entreated him kindly,  
Letting him richly partake of the plentiful stores of my household.

Presents I gave him as well—such gifts as we give to a guest-friend.  
Talents of well-wrought gold I presented him seven, moreover  
Gave him a bowl all solid of silver, engraven with flowers;  
Also of one-fold cloaks and of wrappers I gave him a dozen,  
Beautiful mantles as many, and added a dozen of tunics;  
Ay, and I gave him besides four women in exquisite handwork  
Perfectly skilled, fair-favoured . . . the ones he selected and wished for.”

Wiping the tears from his eyes as he spake, thus answered his father :  
“Stranger, the land thou art come to is truly the Ithacan island ;  
Ay, but 'tis held in possession by men outrageous and wicked,  
Vainly moreover, alas, these numberless gifts thou bestowedst.  
Hadst thou but found him alive in the land of the Ithacan people,  
Richly with gifts he had made thee requital and sped thy departure,  
E'en as was due to the friend who began by entreating him kindly.  
Come now, answer me this that I ask thee and clearly explain it :  
What is the number of years since there in thy home thou receivedst  
That poor man—who, alas, was my son—if he ever existed !  
Ah, he was born to misfortune, and far from his friends and his country  
Drowned in the deep he is eaten of fishes, or else on the dry land  
Lies as a spoil for the beasts and the birds ; nor was able his mother,  
Neither was I who begat him, to mourn him and wind him in grave-clothes ;  
Nor did his wife, rich-dowered and true-souled Penelopeia,  
Raise the lament for her lord when he lay on the bier, as beseemed her,  
Nor close softly his eyes—as is due to a man when he dieth.  
Tell me however exactly, that so I shall learn it for certain,  
Who art thou ? Whence art thou come ? Tell too of thy city and parents.  
Where is the swift ship lying in haven that hither conveyed thee—  
Thee and thy valiant mates ? Or as passenger haply thou camest,  
Brought on a vessel of others, who landed thee here and departed ? ”

Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Well, I will tell thee the whole of the truth and will clearly explain it.  
Land Alybas is my home, and the palace I dwell in is famous,  
Since I am son of Apheidas, the son of the prince Polypemon.  
Also the name that I bear is Eperitus. Hither unwilling  
Over the sea from Sicanian shores by a god I was driven.  
Yonder my vessel is moored in a haven afar from the city.  
Touching Odysseus, the year is already the fifth that is passing  
Since from my home he departed and sailed from the land of my fathers.  
Born to misfortune indeed !—for the omen was good when he started—



ODYSSEUS AND LAERTES



Birds on the right—and I joyed when I saw them and sped his departure ;  
Ay and he joyed to depart ; and the spirit of both was elated,  
Hoping to meet some day and exchange rich presents as guest-friends."

*Odyssey*

*Book*

*Book*

Thus as he spake on his father descended the darkness of sorrow.  
Clutching at dust and at ashes with both of his hands he outpoured them  
Over his white-haired head, while groanings incessant he uttered.  
Moved was the soul of his son, and a pricking he felt in his nostrils  
Throbbing and forcing its way as he looked on his dear old father.  
Forward he sprang, and he fell on his neck and embraced him, exclaiming :  
" Father, 'tis I, yea even the son thou art longing to hear of,  
Now in the twentieth year come back once more to my homeland !  
Nay but refrain, I beseech thee, from groans and from tearful lamenting !  
All will I tell thee—but great is the need no moment be wasted.  
Every suitor is slain. In the hall of the palace I slew them,  
Taking revenge on their bitter disdain and iniquitous actions."

Then gave answer his father Laertes and spake to him saying :  
" Beest thou truly Odysseus my son come back to the homeland,  
Show me a sure and a manifest token, to make me believe it."  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
" First look hither, I pray, and behold this scar, and bethink thee !  
This was the wound that a boar's white tusk on Parnassus inflicted,  
Whither I went at thy wish and the wish of the lady my mother  
Unto her well-loved sire, prince Autolycus, to receive there  
Presents, that once when he came to us here he had solemnly promised.  
Come, I will show thee as well in the terraced orchard the fruit-trees,  
Those that thou gavest me once for my own, when I begged, as a child will,  
Asking for this and for that as I followed thee over the garden.  
Through it we passed just here, and thou toldst me the names of the fruit-trees.  
Thirteen trees of the pears thou didst give me, and ten of the apples,  
Forty of figs ; and of vines here also thou mad'st me a present,  
Rows full fifty ; and each of the rows bore fruit in succession,  
So that upon these vines there hung all manner of clusters,  
Did but the seasons of Zeus from above make heavy the fruitage."

Thus as he spake were loosened the knees and the heart of Laertes,  
Since to himself he confessed that the token was sure that he gave him.  
Stretching his arms to embrace him he sank in a swoon, but was holden  
Clasped to the breast of his son, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
Then, when at last he revived and the soul was recalled to the senses,



*Odyssey* Once more unto Odysseus he spake and answered him, saying :  
*XXI* "Zeus, great Father !—Ye gods still live in the heights of Olympus,  
*850-888* Should it be true that the insolent pride of the suitors is punished !  
Ah but I dreadfully fear that the whole of the Ithacan people  
Soon will collect to attack us, and send forth messengers quickly  
Hither and thither to call to their aid Cephallenian cities."  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
"Be not afraid, nor allow these matters to trouble thy spirit !  
Come, let us go to the house that is standing anigh to the orchard.  
Thither was Telemachus, with the cowherd and also the swineherd,  
Sent by myself, and I bade them at once to prepare us a dinner."

These words ended, the twain to the fair-built mansion betook them.  
Soon at the pleasant abodes of the farm they arrived, and within it  
Found prince Telemachus and the cowherd and also the swineherd  
Carving abundance of meat and mixing the fiery red wine.  
Now when he came to the house was the old brave-hearted Laertes  
Bathed and anointed with oil by the agéd Sicilian house-dame.  
Round him a beautiful mantle she cast, and the goddess Athene  
Drawing anigh made stronger the limbs of the prince of the people ;  
Taller she made him appear than before and greater in person.  
Then from the bath he returned ; and his well-loved son was astounded  
Seeing his father before him in semblance like an immortal.  
Opening therefore his lips these swift-winged words he addressed him :  
"Truly I ween, O father, that one of the gods everlasting  
Taller in body hath made thee and goodlier too in appearance."  
Him did Laertes the wise addressing in turn give answer :  
"Ay, and I would, O Zeus and Athena and Phoebus Apollo,  
Such as of yore when I ruled Cephallenian people and captured  
Nericus, strong-built fort that was set on a cliff of the mainland,  
Even as such I had stood yestre'en in the hall of my homestead,  
Clad in my armour, beside thee, to help thee in fighting the suitors,  
Beating them back ; and of many a man, as we fought in the palace,  
Sure I had loosened the knees, and made thee rejoice to behold it."

Thus did the father and son hold converse one with another.  
Then, when the others had finished the work of preparing the dinner,  
All of them seating themselves on the chairs and the benches in order  
Put forth hands to the food—And shortly thereafter the agéd  
Dolius drawing anigh they perceived and the sons of the old man,  
Wearied from work in the fields ; for to call them had hastened their mother,

Even the aged Sicilian dame, who had reared them and alway  
Lovingly tended their father when eld came creeping upon him.  
These, when Odysseus they saw and had won in their hearts an assurance,  
Stood there all dumbfoundered in silent amaze ; but Odysseus  
Quietly speaking with words right gentle and friendly addressed them :  
“Come, old man, and be seated !—and all of you cease from amazement.  
Come ! Though eagerly wishing to put forth hands on the viands,  
Long in the hall we awaited thy coming, expecting you alway.”

Thus did he speak ; but with arms outstretched came Dolius forward  
Straight to Odysseus, and grasping his hand he uplifted and kissed it,  
Pressing his lips on the wrist ; and with swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Master belov’d, thou art come ! and despite our longings and hopings  
Never we thought to behold thee again ! Now heaven hath brought thee !  
Welcome and hail to thee ! hail ! May the gods all happiness grant thee !  
Tell me however exactly, I beg thee, that so I shall learn it,  
Whether already for certain the wise-souled Penelopeia  
Knoweth of this thy return ; or else shall we send her a message ?”  
Him then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :  
“Father, she knows it already—thou needst not to trouble about it.”  
So did he speak, and the other returned to his polished settle.  
Likewise also his sons encompassed the famous Odysseus,  
Giving him welcome in words and grasping the hand of the hero.  
Then at the table in order they sat by the side of their father.

While these men in the hall of the farm were busily dining,  
Swiftly the messenger Rumour had sped through all of the city  
Bearing the news of the fate and the terrible end of the suitors.  
All at the same time heard it, and thronging from every quarter  
Gathered with groans and with moaning in front of the house of Odysseus.  
Each then bare from the palace his dead to be buried ; the others,  
Those that had come from a distance, they sent each one to his city,  
Giving them over to fishers on swift-winged ships to convey them.  
Then in a body they went to the square, o’ermastered by sorrow.  
Here when they all had collected together and formed an assembly,  
Prince Eueithes rose to address them, the heart in his bosom  
Heavy with insoluble grief for his son, his belovéd,  
Antinous, who was smitten the first by the godlike Odysseus ;  
Yea and in tears as he thought of his son he arose to address them :  
“Friends, ’tis a terrible wrong that Odysseus hath done the Achaeans.  
Many a good brave fellow he took in his ships—and he lost them.

*Odyssey.* All of the hollow vessels he lost and all of his shipmates.  
*XXII* Now he has come and has murdered the best Cephallenian nobles.  
Up then, ere he escape and shall gain him a refuge at Pylos,  
Or peradventure in Elis divine, where rule the Epeians!  
Up! let us go, lest shame o'erwhelm us for ever hereafter!  
Yea, for with bitter disdain would unborn ages recount it  
Should we refrain us in fear and on slayers of sons and of brothers  
Fail to avenge us. For me would life lose all of its sweetness.  
Sweeter I hold it to die on the spot and to join the departed.  
Come, let us go—lest crossing the sea these fellows escape us!"

Thus did he speak and his tears moved all the Achaeans to pity.  
Now drew nigh them the singer divine and Medon the herald.  
Issuing forth from the halls of Odysseus (for sleep had released them)  
Unto the council they came; and all were seized with amazement.

Then did the wise old Medon the herald begin to address them:  
"Ithacans, listen, I pray, to my words, for I deem that Odysseus  
Nought hath designed and fulfilled but the will of the gods everlasting.  
Yea I beheld it myself. . . 'twas a god immortal that stood there  
Close to the side of Odysseus, in all things likened to Mentor;  
Now in the front of Odysseus appearing the heavenly presence  
Onward incited him;—now it was raging around as a tempest  
Frighting the suitors; and thickly they fell one over another."

Thus did he speak. Forthwith pale dread seized all the Achaeans.  
Then uprose in the midst to address them the old Halitherses,  
Mastor's son, who alone saw clearly the past and the future.  
So with a kindly intention he openly spake and addressed them:  
"Ithacans, listen, I pray! Give heed to the words I shall utter!  
Your own cowardly folly, my friends, caused all that has happened.  
Neither myself did ye heed nor Mentor the prince of the people,  
Begging you stay your sons from their senseless, iniquitous actions.  
Thus great evil they wrought in their wicked infatuate madness,  
Wasting the wealth of a man and treating his wife with dishonour,  
Even the lord of the land—for they thought he was vanished for ever.  
Now let it thus be determined: accept the advice that I give you:  
None of you go!—that he find not the doom that he planned for another."  
Thus as spake upleapt to their feet with a vehement clamour  
More than the half of the council; the rest kept quietly seated.  
Not to the mind of the most was the word he had spoken, but rather

Eupeithes they approved ; and they hastily ran for their armour.  
So when they now on their bodies had buckled the glittering harness,  
Marshalled together in front of the wide-wayed town they assembled,  
Eupeithes at the head of them all—in his ignorant folly.  
Hoping to wreak his revenge for the death of his son, he was fated  
Never again from the fray to return, but to meet with his doom there.

Odyssey  
XIII  
47-59

Now did Athena to Zeus, great Father Cronion, address her :  
“Father of gods, O mighty Cronion, the highest of monarchs,  
Tell me a thing that I ask : what counsel is hidden within thee ?  
Say, is it further of war and the terrible din of the battle  
Now thou art thinking, or planning for peace and for friendship between them ?”

Her then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the storm-clouds :  
“Nay but, my child, what makes thee to ask and to urge me with questions ?  
Surely the plan was devised, and by none but thyself, that Odysseus  
Safely returned to his home should wreak his revenge on the suitors.  
Act as thou wilt ! Natherless I will tell thee the way that is wisest.  
Now that the godlike Odysseus hath punished the sins of the suitors,  
Peace at the altar be made ! Let Odysseus hereafter be monarch.  
Then let us make in their hearts this slaying of sons and of brothers  
Wholly forgot : let them live henceforward in love and in friendship  
E'en as in days long past, and let peace and prosperity bless them.”

Thus as he spake still more he incited the zeal of Athene ;  
Flashing she fell to the earth from the glittering heights of Olympus.

Now when at last they had lost the delight in the pleasure of eating  
Unto the others began long-suffering godlike Odysseus :  
“One of you go and observe lest any approach to attack us.”  
So did he speak, and a son of the old man Dolius rising  
Went to the threshold, and looked—and already at hand he beheld them.  
Quickly he turned to Odysseus, and swift-winged words he addressed him :  
“Here be the men, quite close ! Quick, quick ! Let us hasten to arm us !”

Thus did he speak, and they ran for their arms and arrayed them in harness.  
Six were Dolius' sons and three were those with Odysseus ;  
Also the agéd Laertes himself and Dolius armed them,  
White-haired warriors, forced once more to equip them for battle.  
So, when they now on their bodies had buckled the glittering armour,  
Flinging the door wide open they came forth, led by Odysseus.

*Chryseis* Now did the daughter of Zeus draw nigh them, the goddess Athene,  
*Xanth* Once more likened to Mentor in voice and in bodily semblance.  
*Book 540* Seeing her there he rejoiced, long-suffering godlike Odysseus.  
Quickly to Telemachus his beloved he turned and addressed him :  
"Telemachus, thou shalt learn—since now thou art come to the battle  
Where men mix in the fray and the victory falls to the bravest—  
Not to dishonour the race of thy fathers, who ever aroretime  
Unto the ends of the earth were famous for might and for manhood."  
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :  
"Yea, if thou wilt, thou shalt see me, my father (for passion incites me),  
Nowise bringing dishonour on those of thy race, as thou sayest."  
Thus spake Telemachus, and Laertes exulted, exclaiming :  
"Ah, how blessed a day, dear gods ! Of a truth I am happy,  
Hearing my son and the son of my son thus vying in valour."

Then drew nigh and addressed him the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
"Son of Arceisius, dearest by far of my friends and my comrades,  
Offer the grey-eyed Maiden a prayer and the Father of heaven,  
Then poise quickly above thee thy spear long-shafted and hurl it."  
Thus as she spake vast strength to his arm lent Pallas Athene.  
Uttering therefore a prayer to the daughter of Zeus the Almighty  
Quickly above him his spear long-shafted he poised, and he hurled it.  
Eupheithes was the foe that it struck—on the bronzen cheek-piece.  
Nor did the helmet defend him. The blade passed through it completely.  
Over he fell with a crash, and his armour rattled upon him.  
Then on the foremost ranks with his glorious son did Odysseus  
Fall with the edge of the sword, and with spears twy-bladed they smote them ;  
Yea, they had wholly despoiled them of hope of return and had slain them  
Had not Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis,  
Loudly uplifting her voice, called out to the fighters and stayed them :  
"Ithacans, stay, I command you, this fatal and furious warfare !  
Speedily settle the quarrel without more shedding of life-blood !"

Thus as Athene spake pale dread seized all of the toemen.  
Out of their hands, as in terror they stood, went flying the weapons,  
All of them dropping to earth at the sound of the voice of the goddess.  
Then, o'erwhelmed by the longing for life, to the city they turned them,  
While with a terrible cry long-suffering godlike Odysseus  
Gathering strength swooped down on the men as an eagle from heaven.  
Just at the selfsame moment the sulphurous bolt of Cronion  
Fell at the feet of the grey-eyed daughter of Zeus the Almighty.

Then to Odysseus addressed her the grey-eyed goddess Athene :  
"Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wary Odysseus,  
Hold ! and refrain from the strife and the horror of mutual bloodshed,  
Lest thou shalt anger Cronion the Father who speaketh in thunder."  
Thus as Athene spake he obeyed and rejoiced in his spirit.  
Then at the altar between them a treaty was made by the goddess  
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis,  
Once more likened to Mentor in voice and in bodily semblance.

*Odyssey*

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